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MEMOIRS

OF

THE REIGN OF LEWIS XVI.

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HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL

MEMOIRS

OF

THE REIGN OF LEWIS XVI.

FROM

HIS MARRIAGE TO HIS DEATH:

Founded on a Variety of Authentic Documents, furnished to the Author, before the Revolution, by many eminent Statesmen and Ministers; and on the Secret Papers discovered, after the 10th of August 1792, in the Closets of the King at Versailles and the Tuileries:

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BY JOHN LEWIS SOULAVIE,

THE ELDER,

COMPILER OF THE MEMOIRS OF MARSHAL DUKE OF RICHELIEU, AND OF THE MEMOIRS OF THE DUKE OF ST. SIMON.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

Accompanied with Explanatory Tables, and One Hundred and Thirteen Portraits.

VOL. II.

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— 275, — 10. *For* deduction, *read* dedication.

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE

ON THE

REIGN OF LEWIS XVI.

FROM

HIS ACCESSION TO THE THRONE IN 1774,

TO HIS DEATH IN 1793.

THE first volume of the Memoirs of Lewis XVI. treated of the state of France, from the marriage of this prince to the death of Lewis XV. I shall now begin the history of the reign of the king, and shall carry it to the period of his execution. This reign will greatly attract the attention of posterity, who will find in the history of this prince the causes of a revolution unparalleled in the annals of mankind.

I shall not take upon me to determine the number of those causes: the choice and arrangement of them is still a subject of dispute,

and can only be the result of much impartial reflexion, at a time when the public are unacquainted with the springs of action, and no one will be surety for the truth of historical representation, either to his fellow-citizens or posterity. I shall content myself, at present, with relating in a few words what I have learned and observed under the old government, as to the decline of the monarchy, and the tendency of the general mind towards a revolution, before the reign of Lewis XVI. I shall then point out in this preliminary discourse, the most remarkable epochs in the reign of this prince.

Historical and chronological Enumeration of the principal Events which accelerated the Decline of Authority in France, before the Reign of Lewis XVI. Sketch of the Progress of national Manners.

I have already shown, in the historical memoirs published by Buisson, under the title of *Memoirs of the Duke of Richelieu*, the first breach made in the state, towards the close of the reign of Lewis XIV. This prince, ill-beset in his advanced years, ceased to be ac-

tuated with the personal attention which he had formerly bestowed on public affairs. Governed by a confessor, who was himself directed by the secret passions and interests of his party; led astray by the seductions and mystical allurements of madame de Maintenon, who conceived the presumptuous project of obtaining a crown; this great monarch, in his moments of weakness and self-dereliction, sacrificed the jansenists and protestants to the hatred of the jesuit and the ambition of this celebrated woman. At this period began the decline of the royal authority, so solid and imposing during the long reign of Lewis XIV. The unity of the government terminated with a passionate bull, and an unjust edict. Lewis XIV. was a sovereign powerful and revered, while he acted as a pacificator and the curb of internal factions. He was then the universal monarch of the French, the protector and father of all talents, the administrator-general of all the force of the kingdom, and the director of the will of his people. In an unguarded moment, he deprived the kingdom of the abilities and activity of the protestants, a nu-

merous body, addicted to commerce, industry, and manufactures, that had so much contributed to the wealth of the state. He ceased to countenance the literary emulation of the jansenists, who, particularly in the society of Port-Royal, had been an ornament of his reign. He did still more; he persecuted both the jansenists and protestants, and forgot himself so far as to employ, for this purpose, preposterous laws, at a time too when the state was in profound peace. The French at that period found themselves divided, *by law* and *by fact*, into catholics and protestants; into persecutors and persecuted; into jansenists and courtiers. Previous to the law and the bull which produced these ravages, the two parties, identified and confounded together, laboured in concert; jansenism, by enlightening the nation with its works, which posterity has preserved; protestantism, by enriching France by commerce and the arts. The king, by harassing these two parties of nonconformists, before submissive to his power, united them in open opposition to the government. The consequences of these two errors in politics clearly evince the powerful influ-

ence wrought by an unjust law and a mischievous bull on the minds of the French. The law, driving to despair a hundred thousand of our protestant artists, forced them to abandon this delicious climate, which we love so passionately; and they made an offer of the fine arts of the age of Lewis XIV. to our neighbours and natural enemies, whose rude and unskilful attempts they greatly improved. The bull was productive of effects equally fatal. A diversion in the progress of the human mind was the first result. To works of public utility, derived from Port-Royal and the jesuits before the persecution, succeeded those odious and innumerable books of theological controversy; and the bull besides gave rise in France to those endless disputes between the court and parliaments, which, in 1788, struck so fatally the power of the state.

To the reign of Lewis XIV. succeeded the regency of Philip of Orleans, remarkable for its follies, its immoralities, and its orgies. The royal family, splendid, numerous, and carefully educated in the principles, style, and spirit of Lewis XIV., had all become extinct, excepting one child five years of age, and

two legitimated princes. The nation, under Philip, was deprived of a brilliant court, of the usual regulator and guide, and departed all at once from the decent character which had prevailed under Lewis XIV., to the selfishness and libertinism of the regency. The spirit of stock-jobbing introduced itself into all classes of society, infecting individuals, from the counter of the tradesman to the peerage, and even to the cabinet of the duke of la Force. It is this same spirit which we see at present extinguishing the ancient generosity and affections of the French. But the virtuous cardinal Fleury, untainted with the prevailing corruption of manners, and a friend to the laudable customs, the morals, and natural graces, which the French had carried under the preceding reign to the highest pitch of perfection, happily obtained the exclusive confidence of the young Lewis XV. The long administration of this prelate gave sufficient time to refine and fashion an entire generation, and to re-establish, at court and in the capital, the decent morals which had been proscribed by the licentious example of the regent and his family, the abbé Dubois, Law,

and the celebrated courtesans of the time. This wise minister succeeded in bending the French to the propriety, the rules, and order which formerly prevailed. In a short time the dignity and gallantry, so lately the ornament and support of the royal authority, were seen to revive with new lustre. Lewis XV., at the death of cardinal Fleury, was the idol of the nation. He was unanimously distinguished by the title of *well-beloved*. The spirit of the monarchy being then re-established in its splendor and primordial purity, they gave this period the name of *the glorious years* of the king's reign, some anecdotes of which I published in the Memoirs above cited; anecdotes that were communicated to me by several distinguished personages, who, brought up in the court of Lewis XIV., had observed also and were well acquainted with that of his successor, under whom they had occupied the first employments in the state. They had the talent of generalising their ideas, and they recited with pleasure the principal events of their time, as I have related them. I speak particularly of cardinal de Luynes and marshal Richelieu.

The former had been educated at the court of Lewis XIV., with his great-grandsons; and the latter under the eye of madame de Maintenon. But, towards the middle of the century, the modern philosophy gave a new turn to the genius of the nation. The French, light, amiable, disposed to confide in their government, distinguished till then as lovers of polite literature and the arts, all at once became reasoners. They set themselves to examine the doctrines of religion, and the constituent principles of the state and of administration. They perceive, for the first time, that abuses swarm in the government of their country; and they desire and insist, in all its branches, on a reform. The English, whose name had been odious at court since the death of Charles I. and the expulsion of the Stuarts, were now considered as an enlightened people, and admitted to the character of *men*. The ideas, the manners, the writings of the English, began to be more relished in France, to the prejudice of absolute authority. A woman of low rank, honoured by a marriage with M. le Normand-d'Etioles, becomes the mistress

of Lewis XV., and affects to be the patron of arts and philosophy.

Hitherto the spirit of the times had not permitted the title of *royal mistress* to be given to any other females than such as were distinguished both by their rank in society and their birth. The king, by taking into favour madame le Normand, since madame de Pompadour, approached too near to the manners of the regency. A stranger in these circumstances, the duke of Choiseul, comes to destroy the diplomatic system of the house of Bourbon, with respect to foreign powers. In the interior government, he violates also the system of the court relative to the parliaments. The character of this minister was that of making every thing worse in France. Choiseul united with madame de Pompadour for supporting the rising philosophy, to the prejudice of the opinions which protected the ancient institutions. The shameful war of seven years debased the military genius of the French. The duke of Choiseul, madame de Pompadour, and the parliaments, so much interested in maintaining future generations in submission to the

existing form of government, attack the order of jesuits, established at the remarkable epoch of the restoration of the modern monarchies, and established purposely to spread in the minds of youth the principles which were the support of it. The rising generation is deprived, from the year 1762, of the instruction of the jesuits, which tended to support the royal authority and the love of order, and zealously opposed the doctrine of philosophical innovations. The influence of the writings of Voltaire and the principles of Rousseau, upon the minds of the generation who have conducted the French revolution, succeeds to the influence of the doctrine of the jesuits upon the preceding generations. General education has no longer any congruity. On one side, infidelity; on the other, a contempt of the ancient rules of public decency, succeed to a respect for these moral and religious opinions. Lewis XV., the abbé Terray, the prince of Soubise, the duke of la Vrillière, the two Richelieus, &c. &c., contribute to increase the depravity. French gallantry is again changed into libertinism. Lewis XV., at an

advanced period of his life, takes into keeping a woman from the lowest class of common prostitutes. France loses her credit abroad. At home, the court and parliaments abandon themselves to shameful debates. Disorder in the finances is at its height; and the reign of Lewis XV. terminates as it had begun. The regent had introduced immorality into France; Lewis XV. re-established it. Amidst this general corruption of manners, the mind is soothed at intervals with a diversity in the scene: it observes with pleasure some societies in the capital, preserved from the contagion of vicious principles; such, for instance, as the court of the duke of Orleans, father of M. Egalité. The first prince of the blood concluded his life in the bosom of the arts and of decent pleasures, while the king terminated *his* in the bosom of vice. And such at that time was the influence of women in the monarchy, that a common prostitute, sharing the king's bed, reduced him to a state that reflected disgrace on royalty; while another woman, enlightened and virtuous, madame de Montesson, privately married to the duke of Orleans, re-established, in the Palais-Royal, decency, taste, litera-

ture, the arts, and the splendor of Lewis XIV., which the late duchess of Orleans, madame Conty, had banished from it.

Thus the selfishness and impure manners of the time of the regency prevailed at the court of Lewis XV. towards the close of his life; but with this difference, that France, under the timid and virtuous Fleury, was soon re-established in its former situation; while, under Lewis XVI., though the monarch was always virtuous and exemplary in his morals, France, instead of returning to itself, ran headlong into a revolution: with this difference also, that under the regent, and during the whole reign of Lewis XV., the class of citizens preserve their morals, which the court, the rich, the fashionable, and the great, universally abandon; while, during the revolution, the lower class, who took possession of places and employments, become corrupted in their turn, and leave to the old remains of the ancient nobility the gloomy honours of severity and jansenism. Such was the progress of public morals, and the declension of authority, from the end of the seventeenth century to the death of Lewis

XV. It is with a generation, formed of all the vices of a decaying monarchy, that the revolutionists have attempted to construct a democracy.

Enumeration of the principal Epochs of the Reign of Lewis XVI. which led to the Revolution.

However rapid has been the decline of authority under Lewis XVI., however precipitate the events which brought the monarchy to its termination, nature, in this catastrophe, has followed a method and a gradation of events, which it is the duty of the historian to study and describe. The object before us is not a conflagration, which lays waste in a moment an immense possession. The energy of the monarchical power, before the accession of the king, had already declined in the country; and the house of Bourbon, which had for ages accustomed all nations to its preponderance, enjoyed no longer the ancient influence attached to its name.

Lewis XVI., during a reign of fifteen years replete with errors, accelerated this state of declension by various important

measures, which become so many memorable epochs in our history. Created king of the French, after the fall of his bastilles and his military power, he likewise leaves to its fate the new government entrusted to his care, which we distinguish by the name of the *constitutional monarchy*. He beheld the inalienable domain of his crown converted into a national domain, and the French republic succeed to the inheritance of his fathers. He saw the long succession of princes and kings, whose names are lost in the darkness of antiquity, terminate in himself. Abandoned both by the royalists of the old government and by the constitutional royalists, we see him reduced to so humiliating a state as to be an object of pity to Europe, and of calumny or derision to the French.

Lewis XVI. had heard himself successively called by various names, the first of which, in his infancy, was that of *duke of Berry*.

On the death of his father, *dauphin of France*.

On the death of Lewis XV., *king of France and Navarre*.

Before the revolution, *Lewis the beneficent*.

In the month of August 1789, by the decree of the constituent assembly, *restorer of liberty.*

By the constitution of 1791, *king of the French.*

By the minority of the legislative assembly in the month of June 1792, *Monsieur Véto.*

In the month of August of the same year, and since by the national convention, *Lewis Capet, Lewis the traitor, and Lewis the last.*

This series of titles expresses the nature of his different situations; it recalls to mind the opprobrious appellations which the French gave to their kings during the primordial anarchy. Lewis XVI. heard the inhabitants of Paris bestow on him the last of these denominations at the close of the second legislature; and at a moment when, a refugee in the *loge du logographe**, he was destined by the legislative assembly to the hôtel of justice, or the palace of Luxembourg, with an allowance of five hundred thousand livres; while the *commune* of Paris, excited by the duke of Orleans, prepared for him the tower of the Temple.

* A sort of box or lobby in the national assembly, set apart for the reporter.—*T.*

The history of the reign of this prince is a series of extraordinary events, which, under the different denominations of *liberty, reform of abuses, state of perfection, public morals, humanity,* and *patriotism,* divested him gradually of all his power. We may perceive the revolution issuing from the royal council, from acts of the parliament, from the administration of the finances, from the vices of the clergy, from the public and private life of the leading statesmen, and, lastly, from the bold productions of the republic of letters, all strongly indicative of an impending revolution. Like the multitude of springs and rivulets, which, descending from lofty mountains, and swelling with the accession of neighbouring springs and rivulets, are converted into torrents and great rivers, which no force can resist, the revolution, under the reign of this prince, increased by the succession of various events, fruitful in new consequences: this has obliged me, in the body of the present work, and at every change of scene, to arrange in a natural order, and by a new classification, the facts which have either been the signs of our revolutions, or have paved the way to them.

Among the causes decisive of the French revolution, under the reign of Lewis XVI., nine principal objects will merit the attention of future ages. The return into administration of a minister exiled by Lewis XV., M. de Maurepas, who overturned all the barriers which this prince had erected for the support of the royal authority, and the recall of a vindictive and turbulent parliament, in the room of one which was obsequious, were regarded by men of penetration as the preludes to some great changes in the monarchy. . . . A seditious and innovating philosophy, introduced under administrations which till then had persecuted it, confirmed, in a short time, these speculative apprehensions, which became still more apparent, when the government, under the pretext of reducing the maritime power of England, sent the flower of the French youth to learn in America the fatal art of exciting revolutions, of dethroning kings, and erecting a republic at the expense of George III. The fears entertained respecting this series of errors, subversive of the established government in

France, were farther confirmed, when a coalition of the ministry and opposition took place, first under M. Turgot, and afterwards under Mr. Necker. Previous to the administration of these two celebrated men, the court had reprehended, as disloyal and seditious, the opinions, writings, and conduct of the French, which tended to weaken a reverence for kings, and an unqualified submission to authority. Under Turgot, on the contrary, and particularly under Mr. Necker, the innovating systems meet with the patronage of the minister; and we find the words, *reigning opinion*, *public mind*, and *opposition*, introduced in the preambles of laws and the official writings of administration. This word *opposition* had been used in France to signify the hostile state of the minority of the English parliament towards the court, the ministry, the house of peers, and the house of commons; but Mr. Necker, by adopting and introducing the principles of this opposition in France, gave dignity to it, rendered it official, concurred with it in changing the character of the government, and called it to his assistance.

The court itself, during this declension, or rather during the reforms introduced by the temper of the times, to use the expressions which prevailed in societies and the most distinguished writings, the court itself laboured blindly on its part to effect its own destruction. The monarchy, during the periods of its energy and power, had been the central point of public reverence and affection; the whole nation seemed to be occupied with the lustre of the king. Under Lewis XVI., on the contrary, the state appeared to be intent only on cultivating the general interests of the public. The court was, besides, being entirely composed of inexperienced youth, devoted to pleasures and novelty, could not bear the restraints of ceremony practised under the preceding reigns. The ceremonial of Versailles, introduced by reflexion and experience, no longer secured it from the indiscreet obtrusions of the public, nor from the examination and dangerous remarks of the malevolent. The pomp of royalty became an object of uneasy constraint, and afterwards of pleasantry and derision. The court, seduced by

the idea of an excellent and refined administration, under philosophical ministers, imagined, that it was advancing towards perfection, by adopting the novelties, which the monarchy, better informed with respect to its interests, had ever most strenuously repressed. Let us develop the sequel of these ideas, and divide in a methodical manner our general observations, still following the progress and nature of the innovating spirit of liberty, which has gradually debased and subverted the edifice of our ancient political institutions.

FIRST EPOCH.

Recall of Count de Maurepas to the Administration.

The recall of count de Maurepas to court, the spirit and direction which he gave to the general affairs of the state, must be considered under the reign of Lewis XVI., as the first of those remarkable epochs, fruitful of unforeseen events.

Lewis XV., though shut up in a seraglio, and of no personal significance in government, inherited, nevertheless, from his ances-

tors, the love of military and absolute power. He had received from Lewis XIV., by means of the family of Noailles, several memoirs, drawn up with judgment, which pointed out the art of preserving to the house of Bourbon the submission of the people, and of preventing the general causes of the dissolution of states. During a period of fifty-nine years, Lewis XV. had himself observed all that was natural and obvious on this point with regard to the fears of his ancestors. "I see clearly how the machine goes," said he, a few years before his death; "but I do not know what it will become after me, and how Berry will be able to manage it." Maupeou and Terray, when called to his councils, finding him disposed to approve of plans of policy for strengthening his authority, which began to decline, laboured with success, towards the end of his reign, to extinguish in France every idea of liberty, by the suppression of the parliaments.

The count de Maurepas, by reestablishing the disgraced parliament, by calling into government the proscribed philosophy, and by substituting Turgot and Necker to Terray,

and Malesherbes to la Vrillière and Maupeou, laboured in quite a contrary direction. Little solicitous about future events, little capable either of perceiving or preventing them, Maurepas, in hatred to the memory of the king, who had kept him twenty-six years in disgrace or exile, destroyed every thing which that prince had established in favour of the royal authority, and constituted anew, to the advantage of liberty, what the king had overthrown in favour of despotism. His resentment, long smothered and concentrated, broke forth under Lewis XVI., in measures of policy contrary to those which had been exhibited under Lewis XV. These measures he intended to direct only against the establishments of Lewis XV.; but they were, in fact, so many assaults upon the vitals of the monarchy; and thus the imperial power of the crown was destroyed by the hands of the first minister.

SECOND EPOCH.

Reestablishment of the Parliaments.

The count de Maurepas, in recalling to its functions the parliament which, like him-

self, had been exiled by Lewis XV., did not see, that he was establishing, by the side of the king, a party in opposition to the government. The extreme levity of his disposition, his taste for novelties and desire of measures contrary to the circumstances and causes of his exile, did not allow him to perceive, that the moment an opposition becomes legal and official in a military monarchy, the nature of the government is dissolved, and political debates succeed to the absolute will of the sovereign. The vain conditions which he imposed, in re-constituting the parliament, for preventing or suppressing its former violences against the will of the monarch, tended only to confirm its desire of eluding those shackles, and gave it an importance which it never before enjoyed in the state. Of a disposition naturally vindictive, developing a copious train of expedients in its resentment, forgetful of the benefit conferred by its recall, but perpetually awake to the remembrance of its exile and the unjust deprivation of its employments, this restless and turbulent magistracy avenged itself afterwards, to the detriment of the royal

authority and its own. We shall behold some of its members of the greatest integrity become the precursors of an implacable revolution, of which they were themselves the first victims, as they had been also the first authors.

THIRD EPOCH.

Administrations of Turgot and Malesherbes.

The administration of Malesherbes and Turgot, is the third epoch of the reign of Lewis XVI.

Before M. de Maurepas had called these two virtuous and philosophical men to the side of the throne, the government imprisoned every Frenchman who had the boldness to manifest principles of a nature dangerous to the royal authority. Voltaire, repeatedly sent to the Bastille or exiled, obliged to abandon his country, and pass the remainder of his life in a neighbouring state; Diderot thrown into the state prison of Vincennes; the Sorbonne censuring Buffon, and enjoying the inquietude which it gave him; Helvetius losing his employments at court; Raynal and Rousseau struck with the thun-

derbolts of the parliament, and writs of arrest against them; were so many strong proofs under the young king of the spirit of the government under his predecessor.

The monarchy had thus already removed out of the way every citizen of talents and virtue. A rigid probity, foreign to the manners of the times, was little suited to a court become almost totally depraved. Things were in this situation when Malesherbes and Turgot first appeared at Versailles in the character of ministers. They laboured zealously for the advancement of dawning liberty; they gave importance to philosophy, which had hitherto been banished from the government; and protected various institutions, calculated for the purposes of beneficence and humanity, which had never been considered but as secondary objects in France. Malesherbes carried his patriotic zeal so far as to visit and inspect himself the state prisons; he expressed in strong terms his indignation against the abuses of the Bastille; he testified his compassion for the individuals whom the precautions of government held there in a state of rigid confinement; and he lamented

loudly and bitterly the oppressed condition of the French. The effects produced by the new principles of the minister relative to this point are known and felt. Turgot, on his part, gave the genius of the nation a particular direction towards liberty, by his care to protect it; he often allowed it to expatiate beyond the limits of authorised jurisdiction, paving the way for innovations extremely foreign to the ancient system of government.

FOURTH EPOCH.

Writings and Administration of Necker.

Mr. Necker, whose ministry forms the fourth epoch of the reign of Lewis XVI., laboured with still greater boldness and success in the prosecution of the same plan. Malesherbes and Turgot had favoured what they called the *reigning opinion:* Necker knew and appreciated the revolutionary genius of the *opposition,* and gave it consequence in France, by calling it the *public opinion.* In this word he thought was comprised, not only a check to the abuses of power, but the stability of his own elevation; and this *public opinion* became the first moving power, the

principal lever of the revolution. A citizen of a small democratical state, which had long since renounced the papal religion, as well as the government of a prince and the order of nobility, he found himself at court so foreign in sentiments and habits to the interests of the two first classes of the French, born the guardians of the ancient government, that between them and him there subsisted a perpetual variance.

Before the reign of Lewis XVI., the state continued to direct with authority the movements of opposition; it repressed in it every instance of extravagance or inordinate freedom, and treated it as a rebellious faction, capable, however, of amendment. Mr. Necker was desirous, that his system, under the denomination of *public opinion*, should itself reform the government; and this was the first effectual step towards the dissolution of the state. Previous to the reign of Lewis XVI., the people, totally sequestered from the knowledge of public affairs, were condemned, as in all states the most securely constituted, to passive obedience: and all the writings of Mr. Necker, on the contrary,

evince it to be the wish of this minister, that the people should judge of the measures of government, and that, on their judgment, his credit and fame might be established. Despotism had for ages abolished, in many provinces, the interior administration of the state; and, by the establishment of provincial administrations, Mr. Necker opened a way for exciting ambition to take part in the affairs of government. Every one of his new institutions tended insensibly to subvert the character and principles of the ancient constitution.

Protestantism, odious to the prevailing religion, and to the monarchy, on account of its affinity to republican freedom, had been excluded from all dignities and administrative employments in the state; the court still persisted unjustly to despise and trample upon it; but now, indirectly honoured by the elevation of a protestant to the ministry, in violation of the usages, laws, and former spirit of the government, it begins to conceive the hope of creating a new administration, and organising it to its own advantage, at the expense of a step-mother,

who oppressed it with such malevolent severity. Lewis XIV., and Lewis XV., had persisted in refusing the sanction of legitimacy to the baptisms and marriages of protestants, for the purpose of keeping that party in a state of subjection; but, under Lewis XVI., the state began to be ashamed of this part of its legislation; and, wishing to become more humane and just, it demolished by degrees the fabric of its ancient institutions, and altered the genius of them.

At the commencement of Mr. Necker's first ministry, there was already known in France a great variety of principles and systems on the administration of the finances, which ultimately divided into two systems repugnant to each other. It is necessary, in the history of the king, to distinguish them accurately.

The first party, strong in the number of economists which composed it, wished to provide for the expenses of a great agricultural state, such as France, by the produce of agriculture. M. Turgot was the chief supporter of this doctrine, and the head of a

powerful innovating party which it had formed in the state.

The other party, no less active, was supported by the bankers, for the most part enthusiasts in favour of English politics, who were perpetually insisting on the necessity of *diplomatising the finance*, and having recourse, in the exigencies of the state, to the transfer of debts, to paper currency, to loans, and to credit. Mr. Necker, at the head of the bankers and a considerable number of men of letters, was the chief of this party. During the great demand for money, occasioned by the declaration of war with England, Mr. Necker, already an opponent to the system of Turgot, manifested a determined repugnancy to the tax upon lands, extolling the doctrine of the English relative to credit, the transfer of debts, and the method of raising money by loans. This rage for English politics in finance raised Mr. Necker to the highest degree of consideration.

To the perpetual opposition of these two parties, and their animated and extraordinary debates, is to be ascribed the constant

fluctuation of the system of finances under Lewis XVI., *as to the receipt*, and the absolute impossibility of establishing, during this reign, a definitive plan respecting it, resulting from the nature of a country at once agricultural and commercial, like France.

In reality, as soon as Turgot or Calonne came into office, and developed their principles respecting the administration of the finances, according to the established rules of the *receipt*, this plan was immediately attacked in every shape by the partisans of credit and loans, who always succeeded in overthrowing with tumultuous opposition the preceding system.

When, on the contrary, the *Anglo-Genevese* system, reestablished in credit and authority, carried into execution its plans, made a motion for loans, or negotiated to great extent in the public funds, the system of the former French financiers in opposition, and whose interests were effected by the change, excited a fresh commotion, which overturned the system of Mr. Necker.

Hence arose the multitude of productions,

issued from the press by Mr. Necker and his party, against Turgot, Calonne, Montesquiou, and our ancient finance, the receipts of which, under the house of Bourbon, had supplied the expenditure of the most magnificent power in Europe, dethroned Austria in Spain, at Naples, in the two Burgundies, in Tuscany and Alsace, &c., and carried the most costly arts to the height of their improvement and splendor.

Hence arose, in a contrary direction, the writings of Turgot, Condorcet, Calonne, Mirabeau, and the old financiers, forming in their turn the opposition to Mr. Necker, and overthrowing with similar tumult this innovating administrator, and his countrymen, who succeeded him in the direction of the finances.

France, administered upon the old plan of the receipts, had supported for ages the expenses of a nation the most warlike and sumptuous in Europe. Administered, on the contrary, upon the plan of the English, it was exhausted in a few years, by the weight of loans and the interest which the old

taxes were become incapable of covering; and it was at the important period of the *maximum* of the interest, and the *maximum* of the loan and taxes, that the revolutions and the great national bankruptcies began. Let us here develop concisely the disorder occasioned in the administration of the finances. The source of our calamities originates in the extraordinary and novel system of a French administration, harassed by a Genevese opposition, which, in consequence of its pursuits, obtains itself the administration. Let us analyse this new and cruel mechanism, which raises and lowers successively two opposite systems in the financial department, and brings into play the different parties of the revolution, with which it is mixed and incorporated.

DEPARTMENT OF THE FINANCES.

Administration.	*Opposition.*
Turgot.	Necker, a Genevese.
Necker, 1st ministry.	Calonne, a Frenchman.
Calonne.	Necker, a Genevese.
Necker, 2d ministry.	Montesquiou, a Frenchman.
Montesquiou, principal administrator of the committee of finances.	Clavières, a Genevese.
Clavières, 1st ministry.	All France, except the girondists.
Clavières, 2d ministry.	Cambon, a Frenchman.
Cambon, principal administrator of the committee of finances.	Johanot, a Genevese.
Johanot, principal administrator of the committee of finances.	

Thus the annals of the administration of the finances in France, from the first year of the king's reign, to 1794, present us with the alternate succession of five principal ministries, or French administrations, counteracted by the writings, opposition, and intrigues of an Anglo-Genevese party, who succeeded in overthrowing Turgot, in extinguishing Calonne's system of *receipts*, in instituting in France the scourge of the assignats, and introducing bankruptcy, &c. This anarchical view of a French ad-

ministration of our finances, assailed by three novel Anglo-Genevese doctrines; this description of contrary and contending administrations, which fall under the blows of their rivals, and rise again several times, still to fall once more; is it not a proof of the inexhaustible resources of France, which is able to resist all the kinds of destructive systems introduced by a stranger?

The system of finance observed in England is doubtless a singular one; but this depends upon the nature of the country, which is insular and maritime rather than agricultural. England, as a commercial power, is the first power in Europe. As an agricultural power, she is in the second or third rank only. The extraordinary expenses of England, in time of war, are supplied by her credit and industry; taxation there is as its *maximum*. At the death of Lewis XV., the extraordinaries of the war could be derived only from the taxes, or loans founded upon them. The practice of a contrary doctrine has thrown the finances into the labyrinth of the revolution, from which they are not yet disengaged.

No man of probity, however, can accuse

Mr. Necker of malversation with regard to our country, nor of connivance either with England or his countrymen who succeeded him, agitators of France, who have ruined us. Mr. Necker had a plan. England, more free than France; England, strong by her credit and constitution, had attracted his attention. He was desirous that France should be governed in the manner of England, and did not reflect, that the English government was the result of a national agreement, which followed after her terrible civil wars. He was for giving us this English result without its preliminaries, and yet the dreadful preliminaries themselves have not procured in France the result projected by this statesman.

FIFTH EPOCH.

The Liberty of America.

While the spirit of the administration was suffering violence in France, under the first ministry of Mr. Necker, the frivolous Maurepas induced the monarch to support, in spite of his personal dispositions, the American insurgents against their mother-country.

It was an extraordinary circumstance, to

behold, in the French monarchy, the ardour of so many young men of quality, renouncingth e pleasures of a voluptuous court, to fly beyond the Atlantic, and carry succours to a republican people, in a state of insurrection against royal authority. This philosophical crusade, which characterises the genius of the time, and the incapacity of the council, was more foreign to the spirit of the monarchy than the expedition of St. Lewis in the East, which our eighteenth century has treated with so much derision. The privy-council of Lewis XVI., sunk in a kind of lethargy, never perceived that their efforts in favour of the liberty of the insurgents, the downfall of the authority of George III. at Philadelphia, and the art of exciting insurrections of the people, practised by the courtiers under the orders of Lewis XVI., would overturn the regal authority in France. They did not take into account the future resentment of a power justly offended and always deliberate in its revenge: they disregarded the remonstrances of intelligent and impartial men, and were attentive only to the encomiums of the philosophers and friends of novelty, who

vied with each other in extolling the expedition of the French across the Atlantic. I have seen Franklin an object of adoration. The war was productive of consequences the most fatal to the monarchy. Young la Fayette, the Beauharnais, the Noailles, the Berthiers, the Lameths, and other adventurers in the American expedition, set off from Versailles with the pretensions and rights of their birth, to return among us afterwards converted and edified by the simplicity of manners practised at Philadelphia, and by the ideal beauty in morals which a republican and virtuous people had introduced into their government. They were observed on their return to be discontented with the military authority and arbitrary principles of the court of France, disgusted at the abuses of the old government, and disposed to produce in their country, against Lewis XVI., a revolution similar to that which they had contributed to effect in America against George III. They had risked their lives to dethrone a king, and create at his expense a republic. Six years after, they despised the court of France and their own constitutional

privileges, to unite with the body of the people, whom they excited against the power of the king: they taught the people the art of revolutions; they assumed the title of *founders of liberty*; they began a revolution of which they could not foresee the end; so much had the writings of philosophers, the recital of American expeditions, and speculations on the theory of governments, given to the minds of men in France a revolutionary spirit, and changed in a few years the character and genius of the nation. What a lesson for the governors of so great an empire! A lesson that should teach us what will be hereafter the destiny of our country, if the march of the national mind and manners should have no regulator or compass to guide it.

SIXTH EPOCH.

Birth of the first Dauphin, and Influence of the Queen in Affairs of State.

The birth of the first dauphin is the sixth remarkable epoch in the reign of Lewis XVI.

The want of force in the character of the king, the birth of a successor to the crown, and the death of Maurepas, who had with-

held from the queen all cognisance of important affairs, concurred to give this princess a dangerous influence in the government.

The royalists of the old government, who, before the revolution, had calumniated without mercy the character of Maria Antoinetta, have since extolled her as an accomplished princess, and a heroine.

The constitutional royalists, particularly the Orleans party, finding her to be the centre of the opposition to their first revolutionary innovations, abandoned her, in 1789, to the insults of the journals and temporary productions, and to the violence of the populace in the suburbs.

The most *sturdy* jacobins, who have persecuted her so rudely, continue still to traduce her memory by speaking falsely of her, or in terms of the most outrageous abuse.

To form a judgment both of the queen and the three parties who have so much stigmatised her, the impartiality of history requires that we should divide her life into four periods, in each of which she will appear in a very different light.

The first period begins with her arrival

in France, and ends at the death of Lewis XV. Maria Antoinetta, during that era, is the idol of France, who beholds in the young archduchess, become dauphiness, a contrast to the dissolute manners of the old king. This prince and madame Dubarry, subjecting their behaviour to no restraint, wantonly violated all the rules of decorum. The transition of this new favourite, from a house of ill fame to the apartment of the virtuous queen Leczinska; the scandal of a false and pretended marriage with Dubarry; the loud rumour of libertine practices, which that marriage could not conceal; and the character of the French, always imitators of their government, corrupted a whole generation. The dauphin and his consort, on the contrary, modest and exemplary, in an age addicted to frivolity and pleasure, and leading at court a life of retirement, became the hope of the nation. They beheld with delight the young Berry, accompanied by the dauphiness, frequently absenting himself from court, walking in sequestered places, visiting the cottages of the poor, and exercising with emulation acts of beneficence and humanity, at a time when

the insignificance and carelessness of the old king were become proverbial in the nation.

The attachment of the French to Maria Antoinetta still continues after the second era of her life, which begins at the accession of her husband to the throne, and ends with the birth of the first dauphin. During this interval, the queen avoids all interference in the choice of ministers, the disposal of places, and the nomination to the financial department of the state. Occupied with fashions, diversions, and pleasures suitable to her age, she seemed to confine herself entirely to the distribution of secondary favours, which she always conferred gracefully, without any appearance of ostentation.

But her behaviour undergoes a considerable change when the birth of the dauphin and the death of M. de Maurepas, at the commencement of the third era of her life, give her the means of acquiring a new authority in France. She then calls to mind the affront of the duchesses at the court-ball upon the occasion of her marriage, and the opposition of the princes of the blood to the claims of the archduke her brother,

when a traveller in France. She removes all those ladies from her household who are distinguished by their rank, by the reputation of their families, and their attachment to the ancient usages of the house of Bourbon. The French ceremonial, one of the sources of the majesty of the throne, becomes the object of her constant raillery: she alters it as she pleases, and delivers it over to the scorn of the great. She intrusts the education of her children to women of no character or consideration at court, which excites the discontent of families, who are thus deprived of their employments. The more state and authority she assumes, the more the aunts of the king, Monsieur, and her two sisters-in-law, contrive to oppose her, and procure her the hatred of the court. The first clamours against her proceed from the court of Versailles, and the palaces of the princes of the blood. The sisters of the late dauphin, warmly attached to the memory of that prince, consider her as the eternal protector of the party of Choiseul, who had deprived them of a brother so tenderly beloved. From the castle of Bellevue and of Meudon, the retreat of the malcontent

princes, since the period of the gloomy and discontented demeanour of the only son of Lewis XIV., the sarcasm is propagated, that an Austrian occupies the place of the queen of France. The royal family accuses her of a desire to assume a superiority over the house of Bourbon, and place the Lorraine princes on a level with the princes of the blood. They charge her with an intent to degrade the great persons of the state, and to raise from the dust, at the expense of the public treasure, her favourites of both sexes, and the house of Polignac.

While the queen, in this situation, is braving the storms which menace her, the clamours and complaints from Versailles and Bellevue are imported into the capital, where they are disseminated among all classes of the people. The cavalier tone which the queen observes in the decline of her credit diminishes every day the respectful affection which all France had hitherto manifested towards her. Maria Antoinetta is no longer that dauphiness, young, charming, and adored, when she employed herself only in amusements suited to her age. In the eyes of the

daughters of Lewis XV., who considered themselves as having happily escaped from the poison of Choiseul, she is regarded in no other light than an archduchess of Austria, an enemy of the French, arrived from Vienna to rule over their country.

The malevolence which prevailed against the queen was yet, before the journey of her brother Joseph II. into France, not without a remedy. But when the remark was disseminated among the people, that she was less the consort of Lewis XVI., and the mother of a dauphin, than an Austrian who detested France; when the nation was persuaded, that she was still an archduchess in her heart, still a daughter of Maria Theresa, and the sister of an emperor, jealous of the power and industry of the French; when Monsieur had published his caricatures against the rapacities of Calonne, reputed the queen's cashier; the French pride, which had never pardoned a shameful treaty, or an impolitic alliance in any of its kings or ministers, changed its feeling respecting her into bitterness and incurable hatred. The virulence of the public resentment increased

from this time; and to such a degree was it at last carried, that doubts of the legitimacy of the presumptive heir to the crown were intimated, both in conversation and writings; doubts which she never condescended to refute, by adopting more reserve in her behaviour. Lewis XIV., from a motive of policy, had fixed his ordinary residence at a distance from the capital, lest his authority might have been diminished by rendering his person familiar to the eyes of the people: the queen, on the contrary, purchased St. Cloud, and moved nearer to Paris, when the concourse of the nobility had declined at Versailles. Her private life was maliciously attacked in pamphlets; yet she still affected periodical retreats to Trianon, which her enemies regarded at least as a suspicious place. Soon the people began to ascribe to her the choice of obnoxious ministers, and the direction of such public affairs as had proved unsuccessful. They imputed to her Mr. Necker's first dismission, the journeys of her brothers, to deceive the vigilance of M. de Vergennes, and empty the royal treasury. They spoke freely of the acquisition of St.

Cloud, the orgies of Trianon, the terrace of Versailles, and the nocturnal revels of the park. The count d'Artois, the duke of Coigny, the handsome Dillon, the count de Fersen, and some of the *heydukes* and life-guards, were mentioned, and pleasures recited of a nature which history has recorded only of nations in periods of the extremest depravity. The people every day depreciated the royal dignity with a malice which nothing could restrain.

In the extraordinary affair of the necklace, the queen was lowered to such a degree, that her reputation never recovered from the blow: the public beheld with indignation the names of the most notorious adventurers, swindlers, women of dubious character, and others of whom there was no doubt at all, joined to that of the queen of France. The memoirs of Bette-d'Etienville and Oliva, or the romances of Cagliostro and madame de la Motte, exhibited every day a company of sharpers, committing forgeries, and playing well-concerted parts in proceedings of the most infamous nature. What a favourable opportunity for the enemies of France and Maria Antoinetta! She was held forth to all Europe as the se-

cret heroine in a business of the meanest and most shameful kind.

In this situation, so injurious to the majesty of the throne, the court continued, without intermission, to display fresh instances of imprudence. In its blindness and incapacity, it committed the egregious folly of increasing the curiosity of the public, by submitting the affair of the necklace to the decision of the parliament, already restless and discontented, and who were sure to convert the appeal into the means of gratifying their own vanity and ambition, always their object on such occasions. They branded madame de la Motte, who alleged that she was the issue of the blood royal, with a hot iron, and acquitted the cardinal, whose conduct had so degraded his high calling. The queen, who was extremely solicitous to obtain judgment against him, imprudently made the effort at a time when the royal authority was so degraded, as not to have even the smallest influence over the decisions of the parliament.

When madame de la Motte was condemned, and the cardinal acquitted and exiled, it was thought that this disgraceful affair would

be carried no farther. The court, however, had not yet done with it. This extraordinary trial, which occasioned so many lively emotions in France, was succeeded by the pusillanimous fears manifested by the queen with respect to the writings of count de la Motte. From the place of his retreat, he threatened Maria Antoinetta with publishing the secrets of the whole proceeding; and the queen, alarmed at the menace, submitted to an indirect correspondence with this man, to whom she granted a sum of money, and the release of his wife from imprisonment. The latter was no sooner at liberty, than, adopting the plan of her husband, she menaced the queen in her turn, with proving to the public, that the affair of the necklace was merely a pretext, and that the real transaction was of a nature very different from what had as yet been detailed. From one embarrassment the court had thrown itself into another. It now became necessary to treat with the wife of la Motte; and the result of the two negotiations, with the husband, a disgraced outlaw, and with his wife, branded by the common executioner, was a fatal

idea prevalent in France, and spread over Europe, that the queen had influenced the decision, and disposed of the necklace *.

Some well disposed persons, observing this succession of events, one rising from another, were seriously of opinion, from the year 1788, that the retreat of the queen to *Val de Grace* would reinstate the court in its former credit, and appease the

* These negotiations were productive of no better effect to the court, than that of introducing into France the edition of the Life of Madame de la Motte, bought at a high price in London, and burned at Paris, during the revolution, in a moment of ferment, and when the queen was greatly alarmed. The whole edition was reduced to ashes in an oven, except two volumes preserved by Laporte, intendant of the civil list, and which the committee of general safety ordered to be reprinted in the first year of the republic. During the detention of Maria Antoinetta in the Temple, the deputy Legendre, so well known for his savage eloquence, made a motion one day, in the society of the jacobins, for tearing asunder the body of Lewis XVI., and sending the limbs thus disjointed to the departments. Nearly about the same time, this barbarian found means of conveying to the queen, in the Temple, a copy of the French edition of the Mémoirs of Madame de la Motte. George III. might reproach Lewis XVI. with having excited France and Europe to wrest America from his possession; but George III. could not reproach him with having granted an asylum in France to the English who had escaped from prisons and punishment, labouring to dishonour him, and to drive him from the throne of the Stuarts, by such writings as those of Morande, the countess de la Motte, or her husband.

discontents of the nation. At the time of the first assembly of the notables, a memorial was actually put into the hands of Lewis XVI., representing, that Maria Antoinetta had no friends but her consort, and a few men of quality, incapable of preserving to her the respect of the nation. It was intimated to the king, that she was evidently become odious to Monsieur, to the aunts, and the whole royal family, except madame Elizabeth and the count d'Artois; that the princes of the blood, the great men of the state, and the public, confidently and loudly imputed to her the misfortunes of the times, and the scarcity of money, resulting from the embezzlement of the revenue to the advantage of her own family. It was proposed to the king to sacrifice her, by sending her back to Vienna, as the last and only remedy to the evils which this violent and general disaffection portended to the state; assuring him, that she would carry with her the execration of the public, and that the royal authority, by adopting this measure alone, would be immediately reinstated in all its former esteem and veneration. This pro-

posal, which might have saved the constitution of the kingdom, was issued privately from the castle of Bellevue. But the good nature of Lewis XVI. resisting such a measure, the revolution, which soon after broke out, and displayed itself particularly against the queen, excited, in opposition to her, the patriots, a new class of enemies, derived from the body of the people, and which it was impossible for her to subdue. At this period, Maria Antoinetta had in France one only friend, who remained faithful to her both before and during the revolution. The probity and constancy, of this friend, who in a great measure sacrificed himself on her account, will have some weight with posterity in forming a judgment of her character; for this friend was intimately acquainted with her for the space of twenty years: I speak of Lewis XVI.

With regard to the malcontents under the old government, who were the first authors of the clamours against her, a part of them emigrating, carried with them into foreign countries a deep regret at having abandoned this princess to the first and violent

emotions of national resentment. Another part of them, equally penitent, but timid and weak, remained in France, and renewed their homage. The queen forgave all their offences, or rather acted towards them as if she had forgotten the circumstances. But there still remained an intractable and violent party, composed of persons of quality, whose hatred to the queen served as a title to election in the constituent assembly. This party became the ringleader in the insurrection of the 6th of October, and joined the duke of Orleans. The king had declared, that he would never sacrifice Maria Antoinetta; and this princess affirmed, through all the scenes of the revolution, that she would share with him in his fate. This royal pair, while they bore up with fortitude under the outrages of the populace of Paris and the suburbs, were unable to sustain the united force of the first prince of the blood, of England, the constituents, the jacobins of 1789, the girondists, the cordeliers and mountaineers, so closely united, so cordial in 1788, when the general object was to debase, in concert, and to destroy the court;

and so furious, so jealous, or so sanguinary, at the division of the authority and spoil.

We have all been witnesses to this dexterous revolutionary movement, which annihilated the former government by the most methodical steps. The first proceeding had nothing more in view than a convocation of the states-general for the purpose of correcting abuses; but it gave birth to the national assembly, with the extraordinary constitution of 1789. Soon afterwards the project of the forfeiture of the crown was manifested, and a change of the dynasty, of which the 10th of August and the republic were the result. Amid these successive catastrophes, Maria Antoinetta attracts all the attention of humanity. In the circle of her party she appears alone with firmness and magnanimity; and while we behold the queen of France, the descendant of a long line of Cæsars, the daughter of the celebrated Maria Theresa, assailed and harassed with perpetual outrages, detained in the Tuileries, in the *loge du logographe*, in the Temple and the Conciergerie, in the nau-

seous dungeon destined for the punishment of assassins, without the smallest emotion of sympathy in her persecutors to mitigate her sufferings, humanity shudders at the scene. The poets had exalted her into a divinity on her arrival in France: in 1793 the jacobins transform her into a fury, a Messalina, a Frédégonde; and this princess, after enduring with patience, and even magnanimity, the new species of insult which every epoch of the revolution superadded to the former, found at last upon the scaffold the destined termination of all her misfortunes and woes. The sentence of death, which she heard with so much calmness and intrepidity, seemed to her the means not only of deliverance, but happiness.

The historical times of Maria Antoinetta are arrived; the epoch is come of citing her, with her judges, to the inexorable tribunal of history; the sentiments of posterity begin to be anticipated both as to the victim, and the men who sacrificed her. History will, no doubt, make many allowances for her youth, and some for her inexperience; while it will judge with severity that series

of factions which abandoned her successively to the insults of the multitude. It will arraign her sisters-in-law, her aunts, and Monsieur himself, who first set the example of clamours and mockery. It will judge the great persons of the state, who continued in the same course, and who gradually diffused a hatred of the royal family among the citizens and people. It will judge the old government, which bequeathed its resentment to the revolution, and made the queen the sport of the Orleanists, the democrats of the constituent assembly, the girondists, the revolutionaries of the 10th of August, who finally threw her into the Temple, and the jacobins of 1793, who conducted her to the scaffold.

The queen, born an Austrian princess, and destined by Maria Theresa to cement the alliance concluded between the two houses of Bourbon and Austria, an alliance reputed by men of discernment to be not only contrary to our interests, but to those of the secondary powers of Europe, had in France, and over Europe in general, many enemies, secret, active and vigilant, whom she had neither the

address to manage nor the force to repel. Guardian at Versailles of the interests of her family, to the prejudice of so many contrary interests of other nations; traversing the views and plans of Prussia, England, the subaltern powers of Italy and the empire, all offended at an alliance which was stigmatised with the epithet *monstrous* in the parliament of England; the queen, had she even been a model of perfection, would have found herself odious in France to the representatives of those various governments. The Austrian party had ruled despotically at Versailles, as long as the duke of Choiseul had conducted the interests of the archduchess dauphiness. This minister had likewise purchased the devotion of the great, by pensions ruinous to the nation; but after his exile, the authors and partisans of the alliance had constantly been defeated by the address of the duke of Aiguillon, successor to Choiseul, and by the silent politics, but always anti-Austrian, of the count de Vergennes, who never discovered any energy of character but what appeared in the constant and secret opposition with which he inspired the

king against the active ambition of Joseph II. and the queen. Hence arose both the success and defeats which conducted this princess to her ruin. Let us briefly develop them.

The same tempestuous scenes which we have seen prevail in the department of the finances of France, by the elevation and fall of that extraordinary succession of French administrations, counteracted by *Anglo-genevese* oppositions, and that series of Anglo-genevese administrations, traversed by the violent oppositions of our ancient finance, had existed for ages in the department of foreign affairs; but with this difference, that England, who adjudged to herself the management of our finances, seemed to respect the right which Austria arrogated of interfering in the department of foreign affairs. Thus the first nation in Europe, France, was the sport of the two great powers who had artfully obtruded themselves, by their agents, into the administration of our principal departments; and such was the conduct of these two powers, rivals of France, that in times of peace they secretly governed our principal administrations, as much

as was in their power. Thus we see, in the first chapter of the present work, the house of Austria exciting troubles in France under the last of the family of Valois, and under the first of the Bourbons. It appeared silent and impotent under the reign of Lewis XIV. If Austrian principles penetrate into the cabinet of the regent, an opposition of the French princes and nobility conspire against him, and the ministry becomes again anti-Austrian, till the intrigues of Choiseul reverse the French system, to establish the Austrian at the head of the political department. If the father of Lewis XVI. contend with Choiseul, the Austrian system, endangered, sacrifices him to the interests of Maria Theresa. The French opposition, conducted by the dauphin and the family of Richelieu, heir to the antipathy of the cardinal towards the house of Austria, triumphs on every occasion over the duke of Choiseul and the young archduchess dauphiness. One mistress had established it; another mistress overturns it. Choiseul is exiled, and d'Aiguillon takes his place. The dauphiness, mortified at the event, is forced to remain a silent and

submissive spectator; but victorious in her turn, and become queen of France, she exiles madame Dubarry, and dismisses the duke of Aiguillon. The recall of the duke of Choiseul was wanting to this triumph; the manes of the dauphin again resists his promotion. An invisible hand constantly retains him in the solitude of Chanteloup: there it fixes him; there it condemns him to end his days in a kind of despair; and M. de Vergennes, by adhering to the treaty, keeps the queen and emperor within the limits of the alliance, which they constantly endeavour to extend and explain to their own advantage.

In this ancient contest between France and Austria, the greatest interests are in motion. The two first European powers intrigue alternately, even in the cabinet of our kings. On one side we behold our sovereigns, heirs of the diplomatic system of their family, opposed by madame de Pompadour, the duke of Choiseul and Maria Antoinetta, devoted to the interests of the house of Austria. On the other we find the dextrous Maria Theresa, who rules in the cabinet of Versailles, and is hurt by the opposition of the dauphin

of France, father of Lewis XVI., of madame Dubarry, and the duke of Aiguillon, defender of the system of his great-uncle.

What appears most remarkable in these contests, is the opposition of madame de Pompadour, who overturned the ministers of the old French system in favour of the house of Austria; while the opposition of another mistress, madame Dubarry, subverts the Austrian minister, and opposes to him the duke of Aiguillon.

A judgment may now be formed of the conduct of Maria Antoinetta, who is placed by her mother in the midst of all the great movements of European politics. The same interests which had guided a French confederacy against the Austrian and federative system of the regent, obstruct the advancement of her schemes.

Under a regent become Austrian by principle, the duke of Richelieu, one of the confederates, is thrown into the Bastille for having defended the system of his great-uncle against the follies of the abbé Dubois and the regent.

Under Lewis XV., the duke of Aiguillon,

engaged in the same cause, runs the risk of losing his honour and his head, by the secret machinations of the duke of Choiseul against him.

Under Lewis XVI. we find d'Aiguillon, the son, become, in the constituent assembly, one of the chiefs of the party raised against the queen and the treaty of alliance. Finally, during the emigration, the young Richelieu, the last branch of the family, seeks refuge, not with Austria, where old resentments still prevail, but with Catharine II., who adopts him.

It is therefore not surprising that the queen of France, destined by her mother to become, at Versailles, the guardian of a treaty, and the basis of a diplomatic edifice which the revolution has overthrown, was exposed to the blows aimed at an alliance which is the pivot and central point of the affairs of Europe; nor is it surprising that the *monstrous* treaty, for so it was characterised by the English, by Sweden and Denmark, by the subaltern German and Italian powers, the Swiss, Prussia, and all those nations who, since 1756, were obliged to form alliances contrary to their interests, in seek-

ing friends without the verge of their natural federative system, should have traversed so powerfully the happiness of the queen.

It is reasonable to hope, that, at a moment when the liberal sentiments of government are recalling so many French into the bosom of their country, the young Richelieu will not be forgotten. I saw him, in 1788 and 1789, the friend of liberty, such as virtuous men then desired it; he is the heir of a family that has never sold itself to powers inimical to France. He has talents and patriotism. He is the nephew of a man to whom, to use the expression of Montesquieu, France is indebted for the knowledge of her force, and the means of displaying it abroad. I declare in the face of Europe, that when informed of my design of publishing, under the title of *Memoirs of Richelieu*, a work which exposes the abuses of the old government, he interested himself in its publication, and countenanced it. He is in the service of a neutral power; but he has never born arms against his country.

SEVENTH EPOCH.

Administration of Calonne and the Notables.

To feed the depraved and ruinous tastes of the queen and court, Calonne, a magistrate of trivial consideration, immoral and destitute of the public esteem, had been called, in very critical circumstances, to the administration of the finances. Instead of introducing a rigid reform, this minister became at court the man of complaisance, and banker to the queen and the favourites. He reduced France to the alternative either of a revolution, or a total reform of the dilapidations, to which he could never seriously bring himself. To alleviate the distress of this department, and support the progressive luxury of the court, he entertained the design of taxing equally the clergy and nobility, hitherto exempted from imposts, and of appointing an assembly of notables, to procure their consent to the measure. This sanction had at all times been refused by the supreme courts: the proposal of it alone had constantly precipitated the ministers from their

places; and at the epoch of 1787, the royal family was reduced to such a state of discredit, that the nobility, dignified clergy, and the chief members of the parliament, of which Calonne composed this assembly, united to refuse, in the most peremptory and open manner, the means which had been projected for satisfying the avidity of the court. In vain was the minister abandoned by the king, disgraced, stripped of his dignities, and his employment conferred on another. In framing the assembly of notables, Calonne had inspired the nobility, the clergy, and the parliaments, with the ambition of meddling in the affairs of state, to the detriment of the ancient absolute authority of the monarch. The parliament, therefore, endured with constancy the penalty of exile and deprivation of their offices, rather than be subjected again to the authority of the court. In this embarrassing situation, the king, abandoned by the notables, the clergy, and the parliaments, was reduced to the necessity of recalling Mr. Necker, whom he had exiled, and who involved him in the greatest difficulties. The notables had deprived the king of the ap-

propriation of taxes; the parliament and national assembly deprived him of the right of imposing them.

EIGHTH EPOCH.

Second Administration of Mr. Necker—By changing the Minority into the Majority, he overthrows the French Monarchy.

At the period when the ancient institutions began to lose credit, men of sagacity in various parts of Europe could perceive the declension of authority. There was not a measure, writing, preamble to an edict of the first ministry of Mr. Necker, which the friends of the ancient *régime* did not attack by the shrewdest observations. A deep resentment, a stubborn incorrigibility on the part of the Genevese minister, were the result of this controversy. Mr. Necker was assailed by the clergy: he conjured this storm by negotiating with his devout and zealous minority, and his irreligious one. He was assailed by the first nobility; and it is known what part he granted them in organising his political restoration. He was assailed by the

courtiers; they were dissipated by the revolutionary measures of 1788 and 1789. He was assailed by the old corps of finance; by abolishing them he transferred the credit of the monarchy, and founded it upon that of the bankers. Odious to the old government, which he degraded, posterity can recognise nothing in Mr. Necker but an enemy to the forms and spirit of ancient France; the institutor, not of a constitutional monarchy, but of a revolution; in fine, the scourge of the house of Bourbon, the last branch of which had confided its destiny to his care. A cardinal founded the royal power, a protestant subverted it. He began, during his first ministry, to sap the foundation of it, by perverting the principles of administration; he overturned it in his second ministry, by confounding the relative state and condition of persons and ranks, which was the termination of the ancient monarchy, and the commencement of the revolution. Mr. Necker gave us the revolution by changing the minority of the *tiers-état* into a national majority; which he accomplished by uniting the two orders and doubling the *tiers*, in direct contra-

diction to the official advice of the notables.

In reality, M. de Calonne, the original elector of the notables, had already organised in their assembly a very powerful opposition. From that moment there was seen with pleasure, at the side of the throne, a patriotic insurrection of the princes, the *pays-d'état*, the first nobility, and the parliament, against the most pacific of monarchs. The inexperience of the nation did not allow it to judge of the nature of this first attempt against royal and absolute power. In the mean time, nothing more was said of the power and rights of the *tiers*. The opposition, formed of the courtiers and the first orders of the parliament, seemed, with regard to the king, to keep within the limits of respect, and the simple defence of their rights: and even when it refused to Lewis XVI. the supplies, which he demanded for the payment of those scandalous pensions and the usages by which the court became so burdensome to the royal treasury, it still observed towards him the exterior forms of decorum, which removed every apprehension of any further disasters to the monarchy.

Mr. Necker, in organising the states-general, constituted an authority of a new kind. By a proceeding truly Genevese, he converted the commons and the ecclesiastics of the second order into the moving power of the state. The commencement of our revolutions was from that moment consummated in the monarchy; for the absolute power of the king gave way to the first measure of the new government.

NINTH EPOCH.

The Constitutional Monarchy.

In the mean time, Mr. Necker, in organising the states-general, appeared to have formed a compound of nobility, clergy, and commoners, as in 1614. The three integral portions of the ancient monarchy seemed not to be at all affected by the measure. The monarchical branch of the constitution, however, was a mere fiction, on account of the relative majority of the voters. In number, authority, and force, the commons had the preponderance; so that what had hitherto been the obsequious and submissive party became invested with the chief power. The

distinction into three orders was so evidently fictitious, that this assembly soon proceeded to dissolve the states-general, by degrading the two first orders, which had constituted the majority, and by converting itself into a national assembly. A republican equality succeeding from that moment, in the national assembly, to the monarchical distinctions of rank, and the nobility and clergy no longer existing, royalty and the people were placed exactly on the same level. In their debates they were deprived of intermediate powers, charged by the state, in other European nations, either with reconciling or officially separating them in their political contests.

The succeeding assembly, formed of homogeneous elements, and entirely detached from the nobility and clergy, being no longer capable of governing the revolutionary movements impressed on ninety-eight hundredths of the nation, which the writers of the time had excited to insurrection, the opposition to the court became so powerful and hostile, that the violent debates, the prelude to the 10th of August, lasted only ten months,

In ten months was seen to perish that ephemeral monarchy, which had been called, in derision, *the monarchy of the feuillans*: it experienced daily the insults both of the republicans and royalists.

TENTH EPOCH.

The Republic, and Death of Lewis XVI.

Such was the result of the innovations of Maurepas, Necker, Malesherbes, Turgot, and others who adopted their plans; such the state to which we have been reduced by the weakness of the court, the nobility, and king. The decline of the ancient opinions, religious and political, which had been the support of the royal authority, and the importance attached to revolutionary and philosophical opinions, had so completely shaken the foundations of religious worship and the reverence for kings, that Lewis XVI., the secret enemy of new institutions, deprived of the power of the clergy and nobility, the necessary pillars of his house, fell by a *coup-de-main* of a few young and daring Marseilians, who came from the extremity of France to dethrone and shut him up in the tower of the

Temple. The convention assembled on this occasion, declaring him to be the natural enemy of the republic, had the audacity to condemn him to lose his head on a scaffold, by which it drew upon itself the resentment of Europe, of history, and of posterity, for ever.

Then was accomplished the vengeance of England, so inveterate and implacable in her enmity to Lewis XVI., particularly after the publication of a paper, entitled *View of the Conduct of France with regard to England during the Insurrection of America.* The cabinet of Versailles, in that work, reproached England to no purpose with the tragedies of Mary Stuart and Charles I., and the degradation of king James. Lewis likewise remarked imprudently to George III., that a legal possession might be gained or lost by a revolution, and that the house of Hanover afforded an instance of it. In effect, this unfortunate prince, after being dragged through the labyrinth of a revolution, saw himself condemned to death: his proscribed family was deprived of the crown; and the republic, unhappy at home, but bold, formidable, and powerful abroad, succeeded to the ancient monarchy.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

REIGN OF LEWIS XVI.

CHAP. I.

Character of the Dynasty of the Bourbons, from Henry IV. to Lewis XVI.; and what it performed for the Civilisation of the Human Species—It transfers the Influence which had been exclusively possessed by the Nobility and Clergy—It extends the Light of Knowledge through the Mass of the Nation—Virtues and martial Spirit of its Princes—Defects in their Character—Progress of Civilisation, from Henry IV. to the Revolution—Haughtiness and Energy of this House with regard to the great Potentates of Europe—Religion and Piety of its Princes.

HISTORY is the supreme and definitive judge both of people and kings. In 1793, in the seventh volume of the *Memoirs of Richelieu*, page 106, I said, "that I should be guilty of injustice towards the house of Bourbon, if, in laying before the public a detail of the vices and defects of its princes, I should pass over in silence those parts of their character which merited commendation.

"There was in the blood of this house a

goodness of disposition which seemed to be innate, and from which it will be seldom found to have departed." It never stained our national history with the acts of ferocity so flagrant in the house of Valois, and many other regal families in Europe. The persecutions exercised against the protestants under the reigns of Lewis XIII. and Lewis XIV. were the work of their ministers, rather than the effect of any positive orders of these two princes, to whom, in fact, the detail of these transactions was generally unknown.

The house of Bourbon was incessant in its efforts for the advancement of civilisation. Its vigilant and unremitting policy gradually changed the national character, which still remained rude and barbarous under the great Henry. It accomplished this improvement by humanising the clergy and polishing the nobility, who then directed the affairs of government; but it chiefly proved successful, by conferring importance on the lower orders of citizens, labourers, artists, and the mercantile part of the community, by exciting emulation in the sciences and learning; by employing in civil offices the men most eminent for talents; and by extending the same salutary plan of administration through all the departments of the state.

This diffusion of knowledge among the mass of the nation, with its gradual and insensible conversion from an uncivilised state, to that of a commercial, industrious, and enlightened people, was the first measure which distinguishes the liberal policy of the house of Bourbon from the ancient system of government. This change was rendered still more effectual by the gradual abolition of the prerogatives of the nobility, which had for ages been the means of preserving the constitution in the form it originally assumed. The result of it was, a new order of citizens, created among the people; or rather, in fact, a new order of nobility, in direct opposition, from jealousy and interest, to the established aristocracy.

In giving political importance to the mass of the nation; in founding colleges in every quarter; in multiplying scientific and literary institutions; and in opening the channels of information to the meanest of the people, the house of Bourbon introduced a new epoch into the history of society, and promoted the aggrandisement of the multitude. It took from the nobility and clergy the exclusive possession of talents, and established an artificial nobility within the bosom of the state. The avowed contrariety of interests and views, between this order and that of the ancient nobility, had no

small effect in producing the open rupture and sanguinary war of 1789.

This political effect must have become inevitable in France, when the government, losing its efficiency, suffered itself to be ruled by a principle of opinion, over which it could exercise no controul. What consequences may ultimately result from this intestine war, are as yet unknown; but at present they depend upon the wisdom or the errors of government, upon its foresight or want of penetration, as the revolution derived its origin from the errors and inconsideration of the two last kings of the house of Bourbon.

It has been justly observed, that courage in danger was one of the qualities possessed by the princes of this house. The valour of Henry IV. is proverbial. His son surmounted almost inaccessible rocks to obtain possession of the Alps, and carried his arms even over the Cevennes to chastise rebellious subjects. Lewis XIV. who loved war the most, was personally, perhaps, the least warlike of the Bourbon princes. His son, the grand dauphin, if not of any distinguished reputation at court, yet displayed undeniable bravery in conducting the sieges which his father had entrusted to his charge. Lewis XV. discovered no symptoms of fear when the balls of the enemy penetrated his

tent. The only instances of courage we are acquainted with in Lewis XVI. are those which he showed on the 20th of June, and the 21st of January, at sight of the instruments of death.

This kind of courage was compatible, in the latter kings, with the most extravagant weakness of character. These princes were remarkable for diffidence in their personal talents. Their implicit attachment to their ministers, mistresses, or favourites, and their excessive love of pleasure, are the failings to which history will ascribe the downfal of their power. If we except Henry IV. who, during his whole life-time, guided the reins of government with his own hand, the greater part of the defects just mentioned have tarnished all the princes of the Bourbon race. Lewis XIII. conceiving himself incompetent to the management of public affairs, transferred the care of them to Richelieu. The reign of Lewis XIV. ought to be distinguished into two periods. This prince, till he became advanced in years, conducted the government by himself, but afterwards was implicitly guided my madame de Maintenon and his confessor. The reign of Lewis XV. ought likewise to be divided into two portions: it was begun by the cardinal preceptor, and completed by the royal mistresses. The last

reign may also be distinguished in the same way: M. de Maurepas and M. de Vergennes conducted the former part of it, and Maria Antoinette the latter. Two remarkable divisions may farther be traced in the history of the Bourbon race, which has lasted through almost two centuries. During the whole of the seventeenth century, it laboured to establish its authority; and during the eighteenth, to destroy it.

The princes of the house of Bourbon, however, were not deficient either in talents or knowledge. Henry IV. in particular, was endowed with uncommon genius and penetration.

Lewis XIV. if unacquainted with the details of administration, possessed the happy talent of discovering men, who were fit for conducting the various executive departments of the state; and, above all, evinced the most cordial disposition to protect and support them.

Lewis XV. had a sound judgment, and good understanding: out of ten different opinions, he could pronounce which was the best founded.

Lewis XVI. had, more than his grandfather, talents which were lost or concealed in his cabinet, and with which the public are still unacquainted.

The prevailing defect in the princes of the

house of Bourbon arose not from the faculty of the mind which *conceives and judges*, but from that which *wills, and either commands or executes.*

Lewis XIII. through the whole of his reign, exercised no will of his own; he resigned it entirely to Richelieu.

Lewis XIV. after preserving the sovereign power in his own person sill 1685, abandoned it to madame Maintenon, his confessor, and his legitimated children; the latter of whom, proving victorious over the antiquated mistresses, the princes of the blood, and the Jansenists their rivals, reduced the most imperious of monarchs to so abject a state, that he has been heard to exclaim in his old age, "Ah! when I was king!"

Lewis XV. had never any real volition in the affairs of government, for a single moment of his life. In his cabinet council, he hardly ever appeared in any other character than that of an acquiescing or unconcerned spectator. It was only by the operation of terror, by affecting him with representations of death, and the portrait of Charles I. that he could be impelled, in 1771, to the well-known measure of superseding and banishing the parliament.

Lewis XVI. was the prince the most dif-

fident of his own intellectual endowments. He was so destitute of character, as to be afraid to discover any will of his own.

An absolute privation of will was in this manner the prevailing defect in the house of Bourbon; and it is this defect which brought upon it the revolutions of 1789 and 1792.

All these princes of the house of Bourbon are remarkable for their attachment to the religion of the state, and for their hatred, often indeed their fanatical violence, against the sects of dissentients.

Very sensible persons still entertain doubts, whether Henry IV. was really a convert to religion, as he made his abjuration at an epoch when it was no longer dangerous to his interests, and precisely at the moment when it was to procure him a crown.

But Lewis XIII. and Lewis XIV. willing to preserve in France an uniformity of worship, and to extinguish the sects of the nonconformists, reduced the latter to submission. Lewis XV. was always sincerely attached to the principles of the catholic church; and Lewis XVI. at his death, chose for his confessor a man whose religious opinions appeared to him to be the most remote from the revolutionary innovations.

It was only with respect to their subjects,

however, that the princes of the house of Bourbon manifested this timidity of character. The kings of France, without exception, have all been passionate, indignant, revengeful, or haughty, in regard to those foreign powers, who at any time attempted to reduce their rank or importance in Europe.

The hatred of the kings of the house of Bourbon towards the house of Austria, in vain assuaged by marriages under Lewis XIII. and Lewis XIV. ceased only at the period of the treaty of 1756. Lewis XVI. the least malevolent of the kings, entertained with regard to the house of Austria the same sentiments of rivalship and distrust which he inherited from his father and his ancestors. We shall demonstrate in these memoirs, that there were two princes in Lewis XVI. the husband of Maria Antoinette, and the secret enemy of the court of Vienna.

The hatred towards England, which had been increased by the unjust and audacious policy of Lewis XIV. when that nation pursued the plan of establishing a protestant king, has never since been extinguished. We feel very sensibly the effects of it at the moment I am writing these Memoirs.

The dynasty of the Bourbons will thus appear in history as a house which, during two cen-

turies, has been employed in the pursuit of pleasure and the arts, endeavouring incessantly to civilise and enlighten the nation, displaying the natural passions of men against kings and foreign states, the rivals of their power, and destined by the weakness of the last of its princes, in 1789, to lose the first monarchy in the world.

In 1589, one young shoot, by his courage, genius, and virtues, extinguishing the factions which then prevailed, took possession of the throne. In 1789, Louis XVI. destroyed, with himself, the rights of twenty-two males, who at that time existed in this house. The subsequent chapter will develope the physical causes by which the event was produced.

CHAP. II.

Natural History of the House of Bourbon—Physical Causes of the Imbecillity of Mind and Character of the last Individuals of this Dynasty—Its exclusive Alliances with its own Relations, and with three or four Families in the South of Europe, occasion its Degeneracy. Energetic and vigilant Character of the Founders of Nations—Insignificant or vicious Character of the last Descendants of Royal Families, who are extinguished or driven from their Throne.

WE have seen a most extraordinary occurrence take place in France. A royal house, the most powerful and most considerable in Europe, is precipitated from the throne of Henry IV. in a very short space of time. Has nature co-operated in the production of this catastrophe? Such a question, when the morals of mankind are the object of consideration, is not foreign to the province of history. I shall endeavour to answer it.

When Lewis XVI. ascended the throne, there were in France five families of the blood royal, and fourteen princesses.

Besides the royal house, and those of Orleans, Condé, Conti, and Penthièvre, there were also in Europe three families descended from the house of Bourbon, which reigned in Spain, at Naples,

and at Parma, and in which were six princes. At no preceding period had the house of Bourbon appeared either more flourishing or more numerous. The succession to the crown, and the stability of the government, had more sureties on the side of nature than ever before had been known.

The case was not the same with respect to the political talents which, for the preservation of monarchy, those princes ought to have possessed. The heroic ages of the house of Bourbon were expired: the blood of Henry IV. had lost the qualities which create monarchies, and either prevent or extinguish revolutions. The double prejudice of the royal and catholic families in Europe, of forming matrimonial alliances only with those of the same rank and of the catholic religion, had induced the house of Bourbon to reject every marriage with protestant houses, and to confine its connubial intercourse to those of Medicis, Austria, Savoy, and Bourbon. The blood of the dynasty which reigned over the French was held so sacred, that to mix it with that of the nobility of the kingdom would have debased it in the estimation of the people: the Bourbons were obliged to have recourse to marriages with Austrians, Saxons, &c. to preserve the dignity of the race; a singular restraint in the physical history of mankind, re-

probated by nature, and which subjected the family to great inconveniences. In reality, whatever additional consideration the house acquired by marriages contracted with its equals, it lost more than an equivalent in point of character and qualities; and it could not but degenerate from the virtue of its ancestors, the original founders of its power. A kind of old age of the family, an effeteness of character, and an almost total annihilation of great passions and sentiments, became a necessary consequence of generations being multiplied and formed of the same blood.

For preserving both the vegetable and animal tribes in health and vigour, and for preventing a degeneracy of the different species, the means ordained by nature is a mixture of families. In the vegetable kingdom, this purpose is effected by grafting; and it is a principle of policy among enlightened people to discourage intermarriages with relations. Nature suffers violence by repeatedly producing new generations from the same blood; while, on the contrary, she is invigorated and rendered more prolific, by connubial alliances with individuals of a different stock; the vital principle, which had been impaired, then recovers its activity, a new individuality, both physical and moral, is generated, and there ensues a recomposition,

which gives life and energy to character. Domestic animals would degenerate in less than an age, if the breed were not crossed. In short, the mixture of distinct races improves every offspring, not only in vigour of constitution, but in beauty and form.

In the human species, this doctrine is confirmed by a thousand observations. We are acquainted with families in which not physical evils only, such as the gout, consumption, and other maladies, seem to be established, and to pass from father to son, but the germ of many moral infirmities also, such as folly, imbecillity of mind, nervous affections, madness, and other similar defects, circulates in the blood. M. Turgot "made haste," according to his expression, to regenerate the department of finance, because, said he, "from time immemorial, my ancestors have died of the gout at the age of fifty years." The history of hereditary diseases is well known. As long as those maladies exist, the race is continually in danger of becoming extinct; its individuals lead a valetudinary life: but when new blood is introduced for the support of a fresh generation, the constitution of the family is restored and the lineage improved.

The practice of grafting, and changing the grain, with respect to vegetables, and crossing the

breed in animals, appears then to maintain and improve the species. Multiplied copulations with the same blood, on the contrary, seem to be the cause of decay and extinction. The difficulty of crossing the breed in its own propagation was, during two centuries, the radical defect in the house of Bourbon.

Where do you find in the race that decision of character, that firmness of mind, impetuosity of volition, enlightened by genius, which animated Henry IV. the head and founder of the power of this house? We see how in each generation the strength of character diminishes, from the conqueror of the league, when the king subdued the people, to the 6th of October, when the people subdued their king.

The house of Medicis commenced with heroes; and its latter princes, at the epoch of its extinction, will be unknown to history. Behold cardinal York terminating obscurely at Rome the destiny of the Stuarts! see how the last male heirs of the house of Hapsburg finished their career at Vienna, in the person of the insignificant Charles VI.! read the history of the house of Valois, and that of Charlemagne; examine the character of the last of the offspring which terminate these different races: observe how many of the sovereign houses of Europe are now decayed, by forsaking the dictates of nature, like

the last shoots of those dynasties of which history recites the decrepitude; while nature is maintained unimpaired and perpetuated among the people, accompanied with health, vigour, and increasing population. To conclude, look into our own history, how many families of the blood royal are become extinct since the time of Hugh Capet! Examine the genealogy of the house of Bourbon, by Desormeaux; examine other larger genealogies of the same family, and you will find that the observation is verified. Reflect on the chronological table containing the creations of the ducal families of the kingdom: all those which existed before Henry III. are extinct: all those which existed in 1572, at the time when the house of Crussol was advanced to the peerage, are no more; for in 1789 the house of Crussol remained the most ancient. The desire of posterity, and the solicitude, so natural, of preserving families from extinction, one might have supposed would have concurred in the preservation of these privileged races. But such sentiments have been useless. The mass of the people alone is preserved, by their morals and by the perpetual circulation of the blood from one race of Frenchmen to another; so that our population is composed nearly of four millions and a half of families, which descend from their father without any extinction of the male line, transmitting existence to future ages by propagation.

exemplifying in the present revolution the bravery of the ancient Gauls, and preserving to their country the splendor, the energy, and the capacity of the founders of the nation.

I might confirm these observations by a statistical account of the youth and old age of the different nations which occupy the globe; I might show how in the north the human species degenerates, and the duration of life decreases, from the severity of the climate and the solitary state of the inhabitants, with whom the neighbouring people refuse to form an alliance. I might mention the great family of the Chinese, separated from the rest of the world, through a long succession of ages, and exhibiting in the countenance of every individual a proof of their national deterioration. These colonies, and many others, have been degenerating from a remote period, in consequence of their isolated manners, and of prejudices which hinder them from intermarrying with other nations; while in the districts of Greece, where the laws, the manners, and, above all, the geographical position of the inhabitants, permitted a continual intercourse with strangers, there resulted a race of the human species the most beautiful with respect to person, and in a moral view the most interesting, as long as civilisation remained in the governments of that happy country.

In fine, the perfection of the human lineage is yet more perceptible in the mixture of the blood of negroes with that of Europeans, in respect both of corporeal form and of morals: whence it may clearly be inferred, that the chief cause of the degeneracy of the blood of the Bourbons arose from its circulation in the same vessels; the prejudices respecting both its dignity and religion having neither permitted it to form alliances with protestant princes, nor to chuse from among the people young women of the country, to preserve to the dynasty a continuance of health and vigour of constitution.

CHAP. III.

Portrait and Character of Lewis XVI.—Opposition of his Character to that of his Predecessors—Their Ostentation, and his Simplicity—Their Love of Flattery, and his Modesty—Their Efforts to extinguish Liberty in France, and his first Concessions to re-establish it.—Adoration paid to Royalty by the People under the preceding Kings.—Attention to the People, and to Humanity, by Lewis XVI.

IT results from the preceding chapters, that the character of the kings of the house of Bourbon appears to be composed of the same elements. Hence arose an uniformity of political events in the interior of the state, while the government continued to be a military despotism from the league to the revolution.

Under Lewis XVI. on the contrary, the state became democratical; and it partly acquired that property from the manners of the monarch. Let us here point out how the character of the king contributed to this effect.

From the time of Henry IV., an incomparable prince, who alone knew how to reconcile popularity with the exercise of absolute power, the maxim appears to be true, which that monarch observed to Gabrielle, that kings were entirely ignorant of the art of accommodating themselves to the people.

In the difficult circumstances where Henry IV. had recourse to negotiation, Lewis XIII. and Lewis XIV. prosecuted their schemes by force of arms. Submission to the royal authority was so universally regarded as a duty by the French nation, that, from the first prince of the blood to the humble labourer, the attention of all was occupied with the glory of the monarch.

Under Lewis XVI., on the contrary, so great do we find the deviation from the ancient principles, that the king himself, and his ministry, implicitly follow the impulses and desires of the people.

It is no longer the people that seem to be occupied with the glory of the king; but it is the king that devotes his whole attention to the welfare of the people.

Under the kings who preceded Lewis XVI. the monarch was universally the idol of the nation. Under Lewis XVI., on the contrary, the nation was the object almost of adoration to the king. Humanity appears throughout to be the moving principle of public measures, and to its influence royalty seems to be entirely devoted. The word *humanity* strips by degrees the royal authority of its energy and prerogatives, and the popular manners of Lewis XVI. contribute so much to the same effect, that the monarchical spirit is extinguished.

Lewis XIV. became personally interesting to many generations. The republic of letters seemed to exist only for his glory. There is not a capital in any province where statues have not been publicly erected in honour of him. Lewis XVI. on the contrary, decrees statues to the memory of illustrious Frenchmen. Lewis XIV. never ceased to recompense the flattery of the poets; and Lewis XVI. prohibits the publication of a work, *Panegyric on Lewis XVI.*, composed by a man of letters on whom he had bestowed a favour.

Lewis XIV. tore out the preface to the numismatical history of his reign, because it comprised an encomium on the engraver and designer, annexed to that on the king; and Lewis XVI. restored the encomium in a manner the most honourable to the artists.

Under his predecessors, the French were sent to the Bastile in crowds. The protestants filled the state prisons under Lewis XIV.; the Jansenists occupied them under Lewis XV.; but Lewis XVI. set open those prisons; and in 1789 there were found in them eleven prisoners, whom he had wished to save from punishment.

The aristocratical spirit of the ancient kings had rendered vassalage a prerogative of the great, and a duty of the people. The king set

the example of abolishing it throughout his dominions.

Henry IV. Lewis XIII. and Lewis XIV. had shamefully violated the laws of modesty. Lewis XV. carried this infringement of morals, and the laws of marriage, to the utmost indecency, and even to incest: he did more, he taught the libertines of his time to chuse mistresses from the houses of public prostitution: while, in 1789, well-informed courtiers affirmed, that Lewis XVI. had never loved any but his consort.

Before his reign, the inhuman punishment of the torture was countenanced by royal authority, but this king abolished it. He likewise abolished the oppressive custom of the *corvée*. Formerly the care of the poor, and of prisoners, was left to the magistrates and the priesthood; but the paternal solicitude of the king penetrated even into the hospitals and public prisons, to explore and assuage as much as possible the misery of the distressed. This exercise of humanity was rendered an object of state.

From the time of Henry IV. the cottages had never been visited by any of our crowned heads. A motive of humanity led Lewis XVI. thither. To discover a virtuous and indigent family, he considered as "a fortunate incident," and he never failed to relieve it.

Before Lewis XVI. the kings, in the administration of the provinces, had abolished the democratical forms, and substituted intendants, invested with absolute power. Lewis displaced these intendants, and restored the provincial administrations.

The ancestors of the king formed alliances with unfortunate princes, who were dethroned by their people; and Lewis, who contributed to the subversion of a sovereign in America, signed his first political alliance with a sovereign people, whom he had rendered independent and republican.

All our former kings considered the states-general as assemblies which rivalled the power of the sovereign; and Lewis XVI., in opposition to the advice of his cabinet, convoked them.

The last measure of Lewis XV. had been the abolition of parliaments, and the termination of a contest respecting the profits derived from actions at law, which the kings maintained against the magistracy during two centuries; and the first measure of Lewis XVI. was to restore the privileges of the parliaments, and to allow them the profits resulting from law-suits.

Amidst the various measures proposed to him by his ministers, Lewis XVI. made choice of the most popular. He convoked the notables

upon the suggestion of Calonne; he convoked the states-general upon that of Loménie; he doubled the *tiers état*, or third estate, upon the recommendation of Necker; in fine, stripped by degrees of all the power of a sovereign, in 1789, in the hôtel de ville, he assumed the cockade with the people, who were in a state of insurrection against him.

From the moment, therefore, that Lewis XVI. ascended the throne, a reverential attachment to kings existed no longer in France. This sentiment was succeeded by that of an extraordinary attention paid by the king to the people.

CHAP. IV.

Sequel of the Character of Lewis XVI.—His Childhood—Opposition of his Manners to those of the Court—His Love for Maria Antoinette—His Mode of Life in the small Apartments at Versailles—Description of his private Apartments—Character of his Mind—Variety and Extent of his Knowledge—His Want of Volition—His private Employments—His Books of Account—Works of his Composition.—Strange Predictions of M. Turgot made to Lewis XVI.

THE dauphin of France, son of Lewis XV. had many years superintended the education of his three sons, the duke of Berry, since Lewis XVI. the count of Provence, and the count d'Artois.

The last of these enjoyed a cheerful disposition from his infancy. He was born sprightly, volatile, independent, and with a relish for pleasure. The character of his brother, the count of Provence, was not so well ascertained; but the duke of Berry had an austere deportment, was grave, reserved, and frequently blunt, without any taste for play or entertainments accompanied with noise, and so habitually addicted to truth, that he was never known to tell a lie. He employed himself chiefly in copying, and

afterwards in composing geographical charts, and in polishing iron with a file.

The dauphin discovered a peculiar predilection for this child, which excited the jealousy of the others. Madame Adélaide, who tenderly loved him, said to him jocosely, with the view of dissipating his timidity, "Speak at your ease, Berry; exclaim, bawl out, make a noise, like your brother Artois: dash and break in pieces my china, and make yourself be talked of." The young duke of Berry, however, was every day more silent, and could never correct the tendency of his natural disposition.

The dauphin, his father, had appointed for his governor the duke of Vauguyon, and for preceptor, Cœtlosquet, the old bishop of Limoges. The latter was a man of great integrity, but of a soft and easy disposition, and was weak even to pusillanimity. With regard to the duke of Vauguyon, his character was less pure than that of the prelate, but still he was a man of probity. He possessed great knowledge of the world, as well as of the politics of the court; and, with a good portion of dissimulation, he had sufficient abilities, though the contrary has been insinuated, to have made the three princes statesmen, if nature had rendered them capable of profiting by his instructions. He did his utmost to enlighten their minds; and if

he was unsuccessful in his endeavours to form them to a great character, it was because he found in their blood, and in their natural disposition, invincible obstacles to improvement. The duke of Vauguyon was a party-man, devoted to the Jesuits, to the archbishop of Paris, to madame de Marsan, and to all the favourites at court. It is to him that history ought to ascribe the aversion which the king entertained for the duke of Choiseul.

The principles of this education were in general repugnant to the spirit which then prevailed at the court of France. Lewis XV. who became more dissolute in proportion as he advanced in years, seemed not to relish the severity of the instructors of his grand-children. Vauguyon, representing his services, expressed a desire of being employed in the administration of public affairs, and solicited the place of president of the council of finances. The king returned him an answer at the bottom of his letter: "You have served me very well, and I have recompensed you accordingly. The place you ask in administration is useless, entirely useless." This was the monarch's expression.

Madame Adélaide, when the duke of Berry was become dauphin, attempted likewise to introduce the young prince into the council, that

he might be initiated in the knowledge of public affairs. Lewis XV. opposed this overture, and was often heard to say, "I should be glad to know how Berry will be able to extricate himself from them:" it was thus that he named him.

Timidity, beneficence, and modesty, were the three first characteristics, which the duke of Berry manifested when he became dauphin of France. He repulsed flattery, he gave ear to the complaints of the unfortunate, he desired to know the particulars of their case, he took pleasure in observing the workmen who were employed at the castle or in the gardens, and would frequently assist them in raising a heavy stone or a beam, which they could not well manage. By dint of filing and hammering, he became an expert workman in the making of locks. The dauphiness, on seeing him with his hands all black, called him by no other name than "my god Vulcan." Why have they reproached him with this innocent employment as a crime? Did not Lewis XV. sometimes act the part of a cook? Did he not work as a turner, in ivory and box-wood, and with taste, in his small sequestered apartments?

At the death of Lewis XV. France was so tired of his reign, that, in every quarter, his grandson Lewis XVI. was publicly called by

the name of "Lewis the Desired." This was the surname which resentment and malignity were inclined to give him; but the partisans of the old court did not relish this title. They opposed to it that of "Lewis the Beneficent;" and this qualification was generally adopted in works of poetry, in official compliments, and private conversation.

People called to mind, that this young prince had himself said, amidst the licentiousness of the old court, that he wished to be called "Lewis the Severe." This denomination appeared too foreign to the national character, which is neither patient in its frivolity, nor Jansenist in its morals.

Lewis XVI. was severe and mistrustful towards the nobility of his court. He was not fond of the great. He discovered no taste for noisy pleasures, for balls, gaming, shows, pageantry, and still less for libertinism. He felt no attraction in royal authority, which was always burdensome to him. He was, however, much attached to the glory of his house; he dreaded the undertaking of any enterprise which might tarnish its lustre; he was penetrated with the instructions of his father against the views of the house of Austria, and the principles of the duke of Choiseul; and his life was a perpetual and secret struggle, in which he was supported by the duke of Vergennes, against the

ambition of his consort. The spies whom Lewis XVI. retained in the cabinet of Vienna, constantly represented this princess as Austrian, both by character and principle, in the palace of Versailles. He lived with her, nevertheless, as a good husband; but, like a king of France, was always vigilant with regard to the views of the house of Austria, and attentive to elude them. Of this we shall exhibit some proofs.

When Lewis XVI. ascended the throne, he was about nineteen years and nine months old: he had then been married four years. He had no taste for gallantry; and he avoided the company of women of seductive dispositions. The French commonly said of him, "He is, however, of the house of Bourbon, and he will show it, as the rest have done, at the age of forty, when he becomes tired of the queen." He was diffident in the company of women, very little adapted to please them, being deficient in the graces, and loving no other than Maria Antoinette, his consort.

The only passion which Lewis XVI. ever discovered was for the chase. This occupied his mind so much, that, in going up to his small apartments at Versailles, after the 10th of August, I observed, in the stair-case, six paintings, which contained the representation of all his chases, both when he was dauphin and king.

In these paintings were exhibited the number, the kind, and quality of the game which he had killed in each department of the chase, with the particulars of every month, every season, and every year of his reign.

The distribution of his small apartments was n the following manner. A saloon, ornamented with gilding, displayed the engravings of his reign, which had been dedicated to him; the plans of the canals which he had constructed; a relievo of that of Burgundy; with plans of the cones and works of Cherbourg.

The apartment over the preceding contained his collection of charts, his spheres, globes, and geographical claboratory. Here were the designs both of the charts which he had begun, and of those which he had finished. He was dexterous in the art of washing them. His memory in geography was prodigious.

Above was the apartment for turning and for joiner's work, furnished with curious instruments for these occupations. He inherited them from Lewis XV. and employed himself with Duret in keeping them clean and bright.

In an upper story was the library of books which had been published during his reign. The library of Lewis XV. the prayer-books and manuscripts of Anne of Brittany, Francis I. the

last of the Valois, Lewis XIV. Lewis XV. and the dauphin, composed the grand hereditary library of the palace. Lewis XVI. had placed separately, and in two cabinets which communicated with each other, the works of his own time. You might observe there a complete collection of the editions of Didot, in vellum, each volume of which was inclosed in a case of morocco leather. He piqued himself on seeing the art of printing carried to the highest degree of perfection under his reign, by the brothers of that name. He had many English works, among which were the *Debates of the British Parliament*, in a number of volumes in folio (resembling in merit our *Moniteur*, the collection of which is so valuable and rare). Near to these was a manuscript history of all the projects of invasion formed against that island, particularly the project of Broglio, and other analogous plans. One of the presses in this cabinet was full of port-folios, containing papers relative to the house of Austria, marked with this inscription, in his own hand: *Secret Papers of my Family respecting the House of Austria. Papers of my Family concerning the Houses of Stuart and Hanover.*

In an adjoining press were deposited papers relative to Russia. The most refined malice has published against Catharine II. and Paul I.

some satirical works, which are sold in France as genuine histories. Lewis XVI. had collected, and sealed with his small seal, the scandalous anecdotes relative to Catharine II., as well as the work of Rulhieres, (of which he had a copy,) to make sure, that the secret and licentious life of that princess, who excited the attention of her contemporaries, should not be divulged by his means.

Over the king's private library, there was a forge, two anvils, and a number of iron tools, with several common locks, all completed. There were also private locks, of which some were of copper, ornamented and gilt. It was here, that the infamous Gamin, who, since, accused the king of a design to poison him, and was rewarded for his calumny with a pension of twelve hundred livres, had taught him the art of making locks. Gamin, notwithstanding his total want of address, so managed the king, that he suffered himself to be treated in the manner of a common apprentice in a work-shop by his master. This Gamin, however, become our guide, by order of the department and municipality of Versailles, made no complaint against Lewis XVI. in the month of December 1792. He had been the confident of this prince in a multiplicity of important commissions. The king had sent him, from Paris, the

red book in a packet; and the part of this book, which had been sealed in the time of the constituent assembly, remained in the same state in 1793. Gamin had concealed it in a sequestered place in the palace, inaccessible to the minutest research. It was from under the shelves of a private press that he drew it out before our eyes. This anecdote would fully justify the inference, that Lewis XVI. was in expectation of returning to his palace.

Gamin, in teaching his trade to Lewis XVI. had used with him all the freedom and authority of a master. "The king," said this man to me, one day that we were talking on the subject, "was of an easy disposition, tolerant, timid, had a taste for whatever was curious, and a natural propensity to sleep. He was passionately fond of lock-making, and concealed himself from the queen and the court, to hammer and polish things with me. In transporting his anvil and mine, without being discovered by any person, we were obliged to have recourse to a thousand stratagems, which it would be endless to recite."

Over the forges and anvils of the king and of Gamin, was a belvedere, upon a platform covered with lead. Here, seated upon an easy chair, and his eyes assisted with a telescope of prodigious length, the king amused himself with observing what passed in the courts of

Versailles, on the road to Paris, and in the gardens in the neighbourhood. He had contracted an attachment to Duret, who waited on him in his private apartments, sharpened his tools, wiped his anvil, pasted together his charts, and set his glasses and telescopes at the point adapted to the eyes of the king, who was near-sighted. This honest Duret, and all the domestics of the interior, never speak of their master but with regret, and even with tears in their eyes. Terror, however, or the hope of a pension, induced Gamin to accuse this prince of a crime, of which he was incapable.

The king was born with a weak and delicate constitution; but, when he reached the age of twenty-four, his temperament amended so much, that he afterwards became even robust. At court, they related of him some particular feats of strength, which he inherited from his mother, a descendant of the house of Saxony, so famous for vigour of constitution through successive generations.

Lewis XVI. was distinguished by such a peculiarity of character, that it may, in some measure, be said, there were in him two men; a man who *knows*, and a man who *wills*. The former of these qualities was very extensive and various. The king was perfectly well acquainted with the history of his own family, and

that of the first houses of France. It was he that composed the instructions for the voyage round the world, performed by M. de la Pérouse, which the minister believed to have been drawn up by a committee of the members of the Academy of Sciences.

His memory was stored with an infinity of names both of persons and places. It was astonishing also with respect to quantities and numbers. He was one day presented with a long account, in the statement of which the minister had placed an article of expenditure, which had been inserted in the account of the preceding year. "Here is a double entry," said the king; "bring me the account of last year, and I will show you that this article is mentioned in it."

When the king was thoroughly acquainted with all the particulars of an affair, and discovered any violation of justice, he was severe even to a degree of brutality. A flagrant act of injustice made him overleap the ordinary bounds of his character: he would then insist upon being obeyed that moment, both to make sure of the atonement, and to prevent any similar misconduct in future.

But in the great affairs of state, the king who *wills*, who *commands*, was not to be found in this monarch. Lewis XVI. was, upon the throne, nothing superior to those private persons

whom we meet with in society, so weak in intellectual faculties, that nature has rendered them incapable of forming an opinion. In the midst of his pusillanimity, he placed his confidence entirely in a particular minister; and though, among the variety of opinions delivered in his cabinet-council, he well knew which was the best, he never once had the resolution to say, "I prefer the advice of such a one." Here lay the copious source of national misfortune.

Upon ascending the throne of France, he had placed his confidence in M. de Maurepas. M. de Vergennes succeeded this minister; and, unfortunately, from that time, his consort was the person in whom he most implicitly trusted. Unfortunately, likewise, this confidence was far too prevalent from the year 1782.

The king, in reigning over a people whom the vices of the court of Lewis XV. had deeply corrupted, born with virtuous dispositions and an innate purity of mind, found himself in France in direct opposition with nature. Some instances of severity and justice manifested by the king terrified Maurepas to such a degree, that this minister ever afterwards seldom opposed him; the king, however, having no decided will of his own, except where equity was concerned, it was seldom necessary. In such a situation, every measure of government required to be a long time debated be-

fore the prince's resolution could be formed. For many years, without father, without mother, without uncle, to guide him by their advice; surrounded in the palace, at the commencement of his reign, by Pézay, d'Oigny, d'Angivillers, Thiery, and having no knowledge of men but from books; he was so desirous of information, and courted it to such a degree, as to order a box to be placed in the castle, for the reception of letters from all who chose to write to him. This step awakening the jealousy and fears of his ministers, they filled the box with libels and frivolous memorials. which, in a short time, induced the king to withdraw this obnoxious receptacle, in which he found nothing but tedious details, which it was impossible for him to examine.

The young prince discovered no partiality for women; and, if ever he entertained the passion of love, it was for Maria Antoinetta, who had all the address of her sex to avail herself of it, and obtain an uncontrouled ascendency over his mind. The king always distrusted her in whatever related to foreign politics; and, as long as M. de Vergennes lived, she was kept from all information respecting affairs of this nature. She never had access to the cabinet where the king concealed the papers of his house against the court of Vienna.

The king having purchased the castle of

Rambouillet of the duke of Penthièvre, he amused himself in making various improvements there. I have seen a register, all written with his own hand, which proves his extensive and minute attention to particulars. In his accounts were some articles that amounted only to a shilling or two. The ciphers and characters of his writing, when he wished to write quite legibly, are very delicate and fine, the letters well formed; but for the most part he wrote very badly. He was so extremely sparing of paper, that he divided a sheet into eight, six, or four parts, according to the length of what he had to write. He seemed to regret the loss of paper in writing: on coming towards the bottom of a page, he wrote very close, not caring about the regularity of the lines. The last words touched the edge of the paper: it seemed as if he felt a reluctance to begin another page. He was endowed with an understanding methodical and analytical: he divided his compositions into chapters and sections. He had extracted from the works of Nicole and Fenelon, his favourite authors, between three and four hundred short sentimental phrases, which he had arranged according to the subjects, and had composed of them a second work, in the taste and manner of Montesquieu. The title which

he gave to this treatise was, *Of a temperate Monarchy*, with some chapters, entitled, *Of the Person of the Prince—Of the Authority of the different Branches of a State—Of the Character and Exercise of the Executive Power of a Monarchy*, &c. If he could have carried into execution all that he perceived of the beautiful and grand in Fenelon, Lewis XVI. would have been an accomplished monarch—France would have been a powerful monarchy.

The king received from his ministers the speeches which they presented, to be delivered by him on great occasions; but he corrected them, frequently qualified different passages, erased, or made additions, as he judged proper, and sometimes communicated the work to his consort. In the execution of this business, it may be seen, that he sought for a proper word, and that he found it. The word employed by the minister, and erased by the king, was sometimes unsuitable, proceeding from the passion of the minister; but that which was substituted by the king was always apposite. The word, indeed, was so well adapted to express the sentiment with precision, that it would scarcely be hyperbolical to say, it was necessary to be a king to find it. He frequently wrote three or four times over, his celebrated answers to

the parliaments which he exiled. But, in his familiar letters, he was negligent, and always incorrect.

Simplicify of expression was the character of his majesty's style; he did not relish the figurative style of Mr. Necker. The sarcasms of Maurepas displeased him. Amidst that multitude of views, which occur in a memorial full of projects, we often find written in his own hand—"this is good for nothing:" in others, he foresaw future events. Unfortunate prince! he had foreseen in his written remarks, that, if a certain disaster ever happened, the monarchy would be undone: yet next day he consented in council to the mea- which he had condemned the evening before, and which brought him nearer to the precipice.

It is not known to the world, that he dismissed M. Turgot, M. de Malesherbes, M. de St. Germain, twice Mr. Necker, M. Calonne, and M. de Loménie, because he perceived, that the plans of those different ministers tended to subvert the monarchy: he appreciated exactly their operation in his private meditations. I shall make it plainly appear in the present work, that, during the incomprehensible blindness of these ministers, the king alone beheld from a distance the destiny and ruin of France. He was endowed with a spirit of foresight, of which the ministers

above mentioned, the principal authors of his misfortunes, were totally destitute. They ridiculed, before the event, the fears and representations of the judicious observers of the times, in the same manner as their friends at present ridicule the observers who analyse the effects, and assign the causes of it. But such was his natural disposition, that nothing could beget resolution in the mind of this indolent prince.

M. Turgot, who had in his character a great deal of asperity and obstinacy, piqued at the king's refusal to adopt his plan of reform, wrote a number of letters to Lewis XVI., in which he cites the effects of the weakness of such and such kings. I have seen one of them, in which he says to Lewis XVI. "that the fate of Charles I. or of Charles IX. is that of all monarchs who are governed by flatterers." Lewis XVI. returned this letter, under a cover sealed with the small seal royal, with the following inscription in his own hand: "Letter of M. Turgot." For the purpose of knowing and appreciating Lewis XVI. more exactly, I shall conclude with observing, that he had translated from the English, a language very familiar to him, the defence of king Richard III., who was accused of crimes of which he was innocent.

Among his books containing the accounts of

the disbursements of Rambouillet, I have found a chapter on economies projected by the king. "I shall draw so much from the sale of this timber, now become useless," says he, in one chapter. In another he says, "this rubbish ought to produce nearly such a sum;" and the sum of the whole is a hundred louis-d'ors, which he allots for paying the charges of executing a particular avenue.

The count d'Artois, who, from a habit of gaming, was accustomed to play high, wished to excite in his brother the same kind of passion. "Will you bett a thousand double louis-d'ors?" said the count d'Artois to him one day. "I will play with you with all my heart," replied the king, "but I bet no more than a crown; you are too rich to play with me."—He could not bear to see persons play high at his court.

Another time, M. d'Angivillers, while the king was on a journey, ordered some repairs to be made in the small apartments. These repairs cost thirty thousand francs. The king, on his return, being informed of the expence, made the whole castle resound with cries and complaints against the extravagance of M. d'Angivillers. "I might have made thirty families happy with the sum," said Lewis XVI.

The writing and inscription 'RESURREXIT,' placed at the foot of the statue of Henry IV. on

the accession of Lewis XVI. to the crown, pleased him extremely. "What a charming word that is," said he, "if it were true: Tacitus himself could not write any thing either so laconic or so beautiful."

The memory of Henry IV. was extremely dear to the king: he was ambitious to make the reign of that great prince the model of his own. The following year the party which excited the people to insurrection, on account of the high price of corn, removing the inscription 'RESURREXIT' from the statue of Henry IV., placed it under that of Lewis XV., then held in detestation. Lewis XVI., who knew of the transaction, retired into his small apartments, where he burst into tears, and continued so much indisposed the whole day, that he could not be prevailed upon either to dine, to take an airing in the garden, or to sup. It is easy to judge from this circumstance, what pain he must have suffered at the commencement of the revolution, when he was accused of having no attachment to the French nation.

From the years of childhood the king was habitually religious: for his principles in this respect he was indebted to his father and those who were entrusted with his education; but M. Turgot instilled into him first a great aversion to priests, afterwards an impartiality

which tended to indifference, concerning the ancient disputes of the church, and in the end a high degree of toleration in points of religion.

At the commencement of the revolution, when he saw both the monarchy and his own person in danger, he returned to all those religious affections which he had formerly entertained. On being committed a prisoner to the Thuilleries, he became a kind of *illuminé*, accelerating the loss of his crown, to preserve inviolate the decisions of Pius VI. respecting the civil constitution of the clergy. It is in this sense, that the priests who are hostile to that system, regard him as the first martyr to their cause and to the discipline of the Romish church, which Lewis XIV., in his famous propositions relative to the clergy of France, had sacrificed to his policy, and repressed throughout his dominions*.

I have long been employed in studying the character and conduct of this prince: his papers in the castle of Versailles, those which were brought to the committee of safety by the victorious party on the 10th of August, and those found in

* I have, however, found in his cabinet the book of a German writer, which he ordered to be translated, and which was dedicated to him. This work was an apology for the marriage of priests. The author's name was Calixtus.

his apartments at the castle of the Thuilleries, are all analysed in these Memoirs. I owe it to truth and to posterity, to declare, that I have not seen a single paper belonging to this prince, which does not prove his zeal for the interest or glory of the nation.

CHAP. V.

Portrait, Character, and Anecdotes of Maria Antoinetta—She no sooner arrived in France than she was a Witness of the Fall of her Party and Adherents—Source of her Discontents in France.—Anecdote of the Pretensions of Maria Theresa respecting the Ceremonial and Etiquette of the French Court—respecting the Sisters-in-law of the Queen—respecting the Princesses, Aunts of the King—Divisions among these Princesses.

MARIA Antoinetta, immediately on her arrival in France, experienced contradictions, which women with difficulty forget. Obliged by the laws of decency to accommodate herself to them from her youth, this perpetual restraint rendered her false and dissembling. Maria Theresa knew well the court of Versailles; yet she committed the indiscretion of demanding, diplomatically, by M. de Mercy, her embassador, that mademoiselle de Lorraine, her relation, and the prince of Lambesc, should have rank next after the princes of the blood of the house of Bourbon, at the festivals given upon the marriage of her daughter with the dauphin of France.

Lewis XV., to please the dauphiness, who desired it, and Maria Theresa, who demanded it, thought it incumbent upon him to make the request an affair of state. He knew the jealousy

of the nobility of his court with regard to the rights of *etiquette*, and he demanded of them, in virtue of the submission and attachment which they owed, and which they had always displayed towards him, as well as his predecessors, not to oppose him in this circumstance. He manifested a desire of testifying to the empress his acknowledgments for the present which she had made of her daughter to France; and he had recourse to the language of friendship, to obtain from the nobility of the kingdom the request he had made.

The complaisance of the nobility with regard to Lewis XV. had been declining for some years, and the king did not calculate on the obstacles which the dukes would throw in the way of this new pretension. The women of the court, from whom Lewis expected the greatest submission and deference, betrayed on this occasion a haughty and obstinate disposition; opposing a determined resistance to the formal demand made by the king, of permitting mademoiselle de Lorraine to dance immediately after the princesses of the blood. They carried their obstinacy so far as to absent themselves from the ball, rather than be deprived of the right of dancing the first. Madame de Bouillon, of all the ladies, distinguished herself the most by the violence of her refusal and her observa-

tions on the occasion. Lewis XV. was so much offended at her behaviour, that this lady appeared no more at court. The dauphiness, on her part, entertained such resentment, that she procured a copy of the letters which Lewis XV. had sent to the peers, saying, as she locked them up in her strong box: "I shall remember it." In the mean time, that the festival might not be interrupted, mademoiselle de Lorraine agreed to dance with the duchess of Duras, a lady who held a place at court. This method of accommodating the dispute diminished the scandal of the obnoxious parties, and allayed the bustle which arose from the retreat and subsequent return to Paris of those titled ladies, who refused to dance at the marriage of the young princess.

The archduchess-dauphiness, educated in the principle, that the imperial house was the first house in the world, seeing those who were mere duchesses contest with her family the precedency next to our princes, felt strong resentment on the occasion. In vain did madame Noailles tell her, with respect, but laconically, that the etiquette was severe and inexorable at the court of France: the dauphiness from that moment only made her the object of ridicule, and resolved to exclude as much as possible from her house the titled females, that she might no longer be served by ladies who maintained such proud pretensions.

The petty feuds, arising from resentment and frivolous altercation, which we have to cite in the course of these Memoirs, had their origin in the events of this day, which the queen never forgot. She never afterwards forgave the titled ladies for having presumed to contest presidency with the princesses of her house. She frequently indulged herself in poignant raillery against the French nobility, even the nobility of the court, who were raised by credit and intrigue to the rank of real nobility, which vegetated, she said, in our provinces. This language deprived her of the homage of many of the courtiers.

The four first years that Maria Antoinetta lived in France, are the only happy years that she passed in that country. The young dauphiness had an angelic figure; the clearness of her complexion was remarkable, the colours were lively and distinct, her features regular, her shape slender; but her eyes, though beautiful, were subject to occasional fluxions. She had the Austrian under-lip. She was of a caressing disposition, cheerful, attentive to please, and well instructed by her mother how to make herself beloved by all at court, had she chosen to follow her lessons. The pulpits, the academies, the most distinguished societies, the journals, the almanacks of the Muses, all lavished

upon her their applause. Flattery had as yet retained in France the forms and the tone of the interesting reign of Lewis XIV.

Maria Antoinetta had been educated by her mother to be one day queen of France. She became acquainted at Vienna with our fashions, our usages, our ceremonial; but she was hardly arrived at Versailles, when she began to rid herself of every circumstance that imposed upon her any restraint. She went abroad on foot, accompanied by one or two ladies of her court; her gentleman-usher walking at a distance behind. She invited her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law to dinner and supper, and accepted of the same entertainments from them, without any parade. She was affable, humane, sympathising, and often delicate in her beneficence. A stag, which had been wounded during a chase when the king was present, struck with his horns a poor peasant. The dauphiness, on hearing of the incident, flew to his assistance, took his wife into her carriage, loaded her with kindness, and granted her a pension.

Maria Antoinetta encouraged and protected musicians. She understood Latin, German, Italian, and had very early been taught to speak our language. Prince Lewis, afterwards cardinal de Rohan, being asked concerning the character of Maria Antoinetta, during his embassy at

Vienna, sent a portrait of her by no means flattering: the original of the letter, torn in some parts, was afterwards shown to the princess. She never forgave him.

The dauphiness, with such a character, had much to suffer in France. Immediately on her arrival, she was obliged to restrain her tastes and her sentiments. The empress, her mother, had recommended to her the duke of Choiseul, as the author and negotiator of her marriage. A few months after its consummation, she was witness to the fall of this minister, persecuted by the anti-Austrian faction of Richelieu and madame Dubarry, and she saw the duke of Aiguillon, the head of the other party, rise to eminence before her eyes. She was besides obliged to assist at a bed of justice, held at Versailles, where Lewis XV. contrived that she should be a spectator of the triumph of the party in opposition to Austria. Her vexation was too evident to admit of being concealed. She was witness to all the humiliations of the magistracy, the principal support of the duke of Choiseul, and to the utter abolition of a tribunal which had conducted the duke of Aiguillon to the very axe of the executioner, and had prepared for him a punishment, analogous to that of general Lally, decapitated by the order of the duke of Choiseul. She beheld Aiguillon, the enemy

of this duke, become confidential minister, and succeed to the places of which the Choiseuls had been deprived. She was obliged to submit to all these affronts, and to assist in silence at the catastrophe, which seemed to subvert, at the court of France, the foundations of the Austrian party; a revolution, which rendered her isolated and forlorn, in a court which was devoted to madame Dubarry, the chief instrument of these disgraces. She felt the greater necessity of restraining her indignation, as she was informed, that it was to her arrival in France that the duke of Choiseul owed his dismission from court; care having been taken to frighten the old king, by making him believe, that Choiseul, the poisoner of the late dauphin, to avoid an anti-Austrian reign in France, directed at present his secret machinations against the life of Lewis XV. to accelerate the reign of a young king without experience, and, fortified by the powerful influence of the house of Austria, to govern his youth by a kind of regency. "The king," it was said to Maria Antoinetta, "is determined to sacrifice the duke of Choiseul, that he may end his days in peace, in the arms of madame Dubarry, who was so much interested to watch over his preservation, and secure him from the dangerous attempts of a minister, who had got the reputation of being a man capable of doing any thing at

the court of France, for the purpose of governing it to the advantage of Maria Theresa, and the gratification of his own ambition."

This singular situation of Maria Antoinetta at Versailles, had been predicted to her at Vienna before her departure. It was necessary that she should do every thing at court, according to her instructions, to prevent the misfortunes which impended. But she possessed neither the talents nor character necessary to traverse the deep intrigues of the family of Richelieu, so long accustomed to conduct them. Before her arrival at Versailles, she had seen the duke of Choiseul, who went to meet her, and informed her of the disposition of the court at that juncture. On arriving there, she was heard to say, that she thought madame Dubarry extremely handsome and interesting. "What are the functions of this lady at court?" said she one day to madame de Noailles, as if she had not known them. Madame de Noailles, having her instructions, replied, that madame Dubarry was at court to please the king, and to amuse him. "In that case," said the dauphiness, "I wish to be her rival." The whole court repeated the answer, without taking it for a smart repartee. Unfortunately the tone of pleasantry proved of short duration. On one side, the court of Vienna perceived, in the

exile of the duke of Choiseul, the importance of the blow which was given to its party, and to the plans which had been formed in consequence of the alliance with Versailles. On the other side, Maria Antoinetta, the dauphiness, ill brooked the superiority enjoyed at court by the favourite of the old king. The festivals seemed to be given only for madame Dubarry. The dauphiness, constrained to submission and reserve, could not pardon the woman who was the cause of the indignities she received. To shut her up in a convent, as we shall afterwards see, was the first act of her authority and influence, the very day on which her husband succeeded his grandfather.

Men of discernment, who observed the delicate situation of Maria Antoinetta, could discover, in the relative state of the two parties, the future destinies of France. Believers in prophecies, and some superstitious persons, entertained the same ideas. The very moment at which the dauphiness, entering for the first time the courts of the castle of Versailles, put her foot on the marble floor, a violent clap of thunder shook the castle: "A presage of misfortune," exclaimed marshal Richelieu, "according to the opinion of those of our age." He was not mistaken. The hatred of the opposition to the

court, and the furies of the revolution, directed their aims chiefly at this princess. Let these Memoirs be consulted on the subject. They place it beyond a doubt, that the dissentions between the French party of Aiguillon and the Austrian party of Choiseul, were the principal sources: the opposite *coteries* of the dauphiness and the favourite by no means prognosticated calm and happy events.

The dazzling beauty and the credit of madame Dubarry, continually surrounded with a brilliant court, and with noblemen in place, increased daily the secret jealousy of the dauphiness; and the latter being obliged, by the order of her husband himself, to suffer this humiliating eclipse; receiving instructions, by every courier, from her mother; frequently indocile; instructed likewise by the abbé de Vermont, the father of falsehood and dissimulation; this irreconcileable animosity could not but terminate in some extraordinary event.

The young dauphin beheld with no less dissatisfaction the state of insignificance in which he was held by the old king. He was shocked at the pomp and the ruinous dilapidations of madame Dubarry. The favourite, on her part, carried her folly to such a pitch, as to demand of the king the most extravagant presents, toilettes of

gold, and country-houses of a new taste, while the dauphiness was gratified with no indications of royal generosity or affection.

Hated by the favourite, the new-married couple lived retired at their court amidst these painful circumstances, in a manner the most exemplary, each solicitous how to please most the other. The dauphiness began from this time to secure the attachment of her husband: she knew so well by what means to environ him, to dive into his mind, and discover the foible of his character, that she resolved, in conformity to the instructions of her mother, to exercise over him the whole united influence of her sex and personal charms. Actuated from early youth with the ambition of one day governing in his name, a caress, a *bon mot*, an affectionate sentiment, happily introduced, were the resources which she employed for obtaining the ascendancy over this young prince. The refusal and the concession of favours, happily timed, were the arts by which she attached him; and we have seen the king in his latter years regard her at once with sentiments of fear, obsequiousness, and affection.

Maria Antoinetta possessed neither sufficient powers of mind, nor resources enough in her character, to regulate the difficult political sys-

tems which she attempted in France. Forgetting that the French had never been subject to a female administration since the minority of Lewis XIV. and that the authority of a woman at that period, as under Mary and Catharine of Medicis, was an authority contested and liable to revolutions, she wished to act a conspicuous part in the drama of politics; and this part was constantly traversed by the opposition of her aunts and sisters-in-law, who exasperated her temper, and became the first sources of her misfortunes. The aunts, after having performed the honours of the court ever since the death of the queen, were provoked at seeing themselves deprived of this prerogative by Maria Antoinetta, and banished to Bellevue or Meudon, in the rank of old solitary ladies. Her sisters-in-law felt grievances of a different kind. Madame remembered with concern, that the duke of Choiseul, by selecting an archduchess, had placed her at greater distance from the throne of France, to which Maria Antoinetta, by her marriage with the young dauphin, was immediately destined. It was surmised at court, that if the duke of Choiseul had been dismissed two years sooner, Madame would have been queen of France. The queen had besides against the house of Savoy a grudge, which ought not to be forgotten. The king of Sardinia, at the peace of 1748, had ob-

tained some fortresses, and a considerable tract of land, in one of the provinces of Italy, at the expence of the court of Vienna.

The queen treated her sisters-in-law with all the haughtiness of an archduchess and queen o France; while these in their turn often assumed a pride superior to her own, placing upon a level the house of Savoy and the house of Lorraine. Thus Maria Antoinetta, in deviating from the practice of the queens of France, who, under Lewis XIV. and XV. were distinguished by their piety, reserve, and total abstraction from the affairs of state, voluntarily exposed herself to the risk of the struggle that took place between her and her sisters-in-law, between her and the king's aunts, between her and madame Louisa, who, though immured in a cloister, continued to interest herself in the glory of her house.

The princesses, her aunts, were deeply tinctured with prepossessions in favour of their nation: their resentment overleaped the bounds of every political reserve; and they formed resolutions of a formidable nature with respect to the morals of the young court, which they observed to be gradually declining. The more the young queen was handsome, aimable, insinuating, bold, rash, frivolous in her taste and desires, ambitious of dominion, and jealous of her title of arch-

duchess, which she displayed on every occasion, so much as to be noticed by the court, they likewise became the more haughty, affecting the superb style of the best years of the reign of Lewis XV. Who could believe that the five princesses, the three aunts, and two sisters-in-law, entertained against the queen such a violent animosity, that they strove with each other who should most calumniate her private life? Whatever one suggested, another confirmed, and a third subjoined her authority to render the anecdotes incontestable.

The queen, on her part, carried her vindictive resentment so far as to intimate suspicions with regard to the virtue of Madame and the countess of Artois. To such a length was perfidy extended, that impartial observers of these intrigues accused Maria Antoinetta of having been in league with the men of gallantry, and even with the guards, who exposed madame d'Artois before the public towards the last years of the monarchy.

The queen likewise experiencing from every quarter perpetual contradiction, and a refusal of the respect, both usual and due to her royal station, became daily more estranged from France. It was soon perceived, that she beheld the nation with an eye of ridicule. Receiving, therefore, no kind of gratification from the pub-

lic, she assumed a habit of visible discontent, which multiplied her enemies every day. Her constant banters, degenerating sometimes into insults, increased the prejudice against her. She thought, that every thing was due to her high birth and her present exalted rank. Making no account of the character of the French, who are naturally not remarkable for patience, the resentment of the great, who held high offices, manifested itself. A body of opposition was formed, which discovered no deference towards her, and obliged her to form a private society or herself. As this society was ill chosen, being formed by a young princess, fickle, inconsiderate, and occupied chiefly with dress and pleasures, the more virtuous part of the court, who were not comprehended in this circle, threw out insinuations against her morals and company. A spirit of rancorous enmity arose between the queen's select society and many great men of the state, or persons who held offices in her house; and so strong and operative was this established hatred, that we have since seen some of the most active members of the constituent assembly issue from the bosom of the court, and act a principal part in the revolution in 1789.

She had scarcely become queen of France, when she introduced the fashion of large fea-

thers. When she passed in state into the gal lery with her ladies, nothing was to be seen but a forest of plumes, a foot and a half high, nodding from the crown of their heads. The aunts, who could not think of adopting this extravagant mode, nor of dressing themselves every day after the model of the queen, called these feathers "an ornament for horses." It is true, that the usages of royal stables being little liable to change, the eight white horses of Lewis XVI. coming out one day on a festival, had their heads decorated with similar ornaments, as in the time of Lewis XIV. "Was I not right in saying, five years ago," said madame Adélaide, coming to Paris to return thanks to St. Géneviève upon occasion of her lying-in, "that feathers were ornaments for horses. Look at those horses, they are like us, perfectly in the fashion!"

In the month of January 1775, the queen carried still farther the taste for feathers. She invented those superb head-dresses which seemed like gardens in the English fashion, with mountains, parterres, and forests. The king, who was plain in his taste, spoke to her with diffidence of those singular ornaments. But in the beginning of 1776, upon giving her half the diamonds which he had when dauphin, he said to her, "Keep yourself to this dress,

which will not be attended with farther expence." This advice of the king had no effect upon her, and her rage for feathers became such, that the cost of a single one was fifty louis-d'ors. "Your charms," however, added Lewis XVI. "stand in no need of embellishment."

Maria Theresa joined the king in diverting the queen's taste from trifles, which she began so early to display. The queen sent her her portrait ornamented with large and beautiful feathers. Maria Theresa returned it with the following note: "I would have accepted with great pleasure the portrait of the queen of France, but I cannot accept of one which represents to me only an actress." Nothing could prevail with Maria Antoinetta to renounce these ridiculous ornaments.

CHAP. VI.

Portrait of Monsieur and of the Count d'Artois, Brothers to Lewis XVI.—Opposition of their Character, Disposition, and Conduct—Account of the Contest between the three Brothers, from 1774, relative to Liberty and Despotism.

WE have seen in Lewis XVI. a prince popular, plain in his tastes, severe in his principles, reserved in his manners, and extremely attached to his consort. I am not conscious of having failed in the duty of an historian, with regard to the portrait which I have drawn of that prince.

I should be blameable in the eyes of posterity, if the origin of the misfortunes of his two brothers were to have any influence on the judgment which I am to pronounce respecting these illustrious sufferers. My work would be destitute of character, if any political considerations induced me to pass over difficulties in silence. I should be the author of a party-work, if I published concerning Monsieur what is written by the jacobins. I should be regarded as an agitator, if, in the lap of repose, which I enjoy with other Frenchmen, and in the quiet which I owe to my government, I wrote the panegyric of a prince who has be-

trayed many defects. In this embarrassment I have consulted my conscience with regard to the subject, and believe, that what I publish corresponds with the opinion of the generality of Frenchmen.

Monsieur, entitled count of Provence, from his birth, called Monsieur, according to etiquette, from the accession of his elder brother to the crown, had discovered at court all the reserve of the presumptive heir of the monarchy. The reign of a brother, who had for many years had no child, had rendered this great circumspection necessary. Monsieur lived commonly very retired, employing himself in literature, and in drawing up historical memoirs of the events at court which fell under his own observation. This prince is the only historian I know of at the court of Lewis XVI. He possessed talents and a great variety of knowledge. He sent privately to different journals, chiefly to that of Paris, some anonymous fugitive productions, with the view of sounding the public on particular subjects of history or literature. Decent in his morals, attached to his spouse, he did not betray, till a late period, the friendship which, however, he was known to entertain for the countess of Balby.

The political doctrine of this prince merits our particular attention. A memoir of his, in

defence of the parliaments established by M. de Maupeou, which we shall insert in this work, shows, that he was a partisan of the military authority, which, during several ages, had been the strength and support of his house. He knew likewise the energy and the constancy of the opposition established in France against any power of this kind; and he had described, in another very curious memoir, the dangers of the monarchy, if the ancient parliaments, dissolved, exiled, mortified, and vindictive, should ever be restored to their privileges. This prince has seen his predictions accomplished in 1788 and 1789. I pass over this transaction, which is of public notoriety, to evince, that Monsieur has in his character a versatility which excludes him from the ordinary class of statesmen, and still more from that extraordinary class of men who are called by nature to erect empires, or to recover such as have arrived near the point of declension.

In effect, Monsieur had manifested at the commencement of his brother's reign, that he was a friend to the system of despotism; and, towards the end of this reign, he contributed to accelerate its fall, by professing democratical principles destructive of monarchy.

In 1776, he endeavoured incessantly to traverse the measures of M. Turgot; and after-

wards those of the first administration of Mr. Necker. The most solid and argumentative political disquisitions against the democratical agitations of these two ministers were issued from his house. Cromot de Bourboulon never ceased to disturb the first operations of the Genevese banker. What then was our astonishment, at seeing Monsieur, in 1788, uniting himself in the month of December with this same minister, and with the minority of the second assembly of notables, to determine Lewis XVI. to double the number of deputies of the third estate to the states-general, and to strengthen the democratical party. Monsieur afterwards took a civic oath, and seated himself on the side of, and *lower* than, Bailly; ridiculing, by this burlesque ceremony, despised at the time by the royalists and hissed by the democrats, the idea, that all the nations of Europe grew out of royalty in the temperate monarchies, and the received notion of the peculiar dignity of the house of Bourbon, with regard to the subaltern authorities of the empire.

Monsieur afterwards discovered a third shade in his character, when, passing into the Low Countries, he deserted this singular constitutional monarchy of 1791; which indeed he had great reason to abandon to its destiny.

There appears then to be in the disposition

of Monsieur a variety of sensations, and in his understanding a succession of contradictory, floating, indecisive, and incoherent political ideas, which determine his conduct, and deprive this prince of that stability of principles necessary for the head of a party, to conduct itself with dignity and success; and it is precisely to a prince of this character, that all the parties which have governed France have refused to entrust their destiny, since the nation has begun to oppose so great firmness to the powers armed against her, and has found the necessity of retrieving herself from the state of humiliation, in which we had been kept by Austria from 1756, by England from 1763, and thirty confederated powers from 1792. The house of Bourbon has been overthrown, when France became ashamed of its treaties and alliances. The first requisite for a people sensible, high-spirited, ingenious, brave, and surrounded by Englishmen and Austrians, is to maintain its dignity and independence.

Monsieur had inherited from the dauphin, his father, the diplomatic system of his house. He was perpetually in avowed opposition to Maria Antoinetta, his sister-in-law. He considered her always as the scourge, and the source of the calamities, of France. He has made no application for an asylum, during his

misfortunes, to any of the reigning branches of his blood, nor to the house of Austria, nor to Great-Britain. He was the natural enemy of England, and incessantly combated the pernicious opinions she caused to be introduced into France. He regarded her as an artful power, that meditated against us the same misfortunes which the Romans solemnly denounced against the republic of Carthage. In his critique on Turgot, he mentions this insular power as the cause of the "depravation of our ancient principles," and of our national customs. In his fugitive and wandering life, we behold him fixing on a state held in small estimation in Europe, to fly to some corner still more distant, but always to some subaltern power, when disastrous fate continues to pursue him. To insult in history a prince so illustrious by his misfortunes, would be the height of cruelty and injustice. Monsieur will be cited by posterity as one in the class of those, who are celebrated for the vicissitudes they have experienced.

In 1760, he was the presumptive heir of the first crown in Europe; and in the ninth year of the republic, his condition is such, that the power of existing upon the earth is become a favour; which he is obliged to negotiate and obtain after every new victory of our troops, or at each new treaty of the republic.

The satirical caricatures, in prose, of the first of April 1776, against M. Turgot, and the engraved caricatures against M. de Calonne, productions of the discontent of Monsieur, and of his creative imagination, discover in this prince a strong propensity to satire; he expresses great indignation at the dilapidations of Calonne, and the rising opinions of the democracy. The memoir of the first of April, contains the most authentic and circumstantial account we have of the state of the court and ministry in 1776. We there meet with a series of true portraits of the principal actors. The king is painted as nature had formed him. The manners of the court, the declension of authority, the progress of democratical innovations, are all pourtrayed with the hand of a master, and in a style remarkably laconic.

The ambition of Monsieur was dark, deeply concealed, indecisive, and fluctuating with every successive event. He seemed little disposed to meddle with the affairs of administration; he intrigued less than the queen, to obtain employments, promote his favourites, or form a party in the state. He never interfered in the choice of ministers; he lamented in silence the misfortunes of the state, and no share of those with which the nation reproached the queen and the count d'Artois was imputed to him. He

managed his finances with a spirit of order and moderation. He was inclined to economy and severity, rather than to liberality or diversions, having long entertained the design of establishing an opulent house.

Monsieur seems to become daily less interesting to the nations governed by the princes of his house. In France he is forgotten or abandoned, or at least remembered with indifference, and variously characterised by different parties, according to the degrees of passion which our troubles have developed. This singular situation would be a presage of his destiny, if the French were not liberal in their opinions, and there did not exist wise men and friends of the republic, who, finding in Europe twenty-two princes of the house of Bourbon living in 1801, are persuaded, that it is for the interests and dignity of France to provide for the necessities of the wandering princes of this family, and not suffer that it should be indebted for its existence to powers, jealous of the internal peace and the future prosperity of our country.

England stripped the remains of the house of Stuart, which France and the pope assisted, in its state of misery and dereliction.

France, more delicate and more generous, will never permit, that the elder branch of the

Bourbons should subsist by the beneficence of Austria or of England.

The count d'Artois, second brother of the king, had received from nature a character very different from that of Monsieur. She had given him a temperament inclined to pleasure, and to irregular and premature inclinations, which rendered his youth outrageous. At an early age he afforded subject for scandalous reports, which excited against him the blame of the public. All men of good morals, and who had an attachment to the house of Bourbon, were affected with deep concern, to find that nothing could reclaim this young prince from his disorderly habits.

The count d'Artois was of a character sprightly, cheerful, satirical, daring, and petulant. His private chronicle is neither flattering, nor at all to be compared with the gallantry of the more splendid epochs of the monarchy. He appeared to be every thing which the king was not; and, in the same degree that the young king was reserved, virtuous, and modest in his conduct, the count d'Artois seemed to be audacious and profligate.

A spectator would have said, at the first view, of the character of the king and of Monsieur, that those two princes must certainly have fixed on salutary plans of policy.

He would have said on the contrary of the character of the count d'Artois, that his system of politics must be irresolute and versatile: but such was the destiny of this unfortunate house, that the two elder brothers, who manifested to the world the most wisdom and morality in their conduct, exercised a policy perpetually fluctuating; while the youngest of the brothers, immoral, volatile, and presumptuous, displayed definitively, in the last years of the monarchy, the bold inflexibility of the principles of absolute power, and the firmness of opinions which are the basis of it.

In the affair of the parliaments, the count d'Artois voted, in 1774, with the king, for the freedom of administration, and the return of the exiled and persecuted magistrates; while, at that time, Monsieur opposed their return.

But in May 1788, the count d'Artois refused to concur with Lewis XVI. and with Monsieur, respecting the establishment of libesty. He avoided obsequiously acquiescing with Necker, with Loménie, with the parliaments, and with the constituents, as Lewis XVI. and as Monsieur did.

The portrait of the king, of Monsieur, and the count d'Artois, may be drawn in few words. "The youngest of the brothers showed, in the last stage of his politics, that stability, which the

king and his brother displayed in their morality; and he manifested in his conduct that imprudence and want of consideration, which they betrayed in their political opinions." We all have seen the count d'Artois enter the world with the opinions of liberty, which he maintained in the affair of the return of the parliaments in 1775. In 1789, we saw him quit France, because he would not urge another word against the opinions of despotism.

We have, on the contrary, seen Monsieur enter the world at the same epoch, a friend to the opinions of despotism, and afterwards, in 1791, avowing, by civic oaths, a determined attachment to liberty.

It is easy to judge of the dangers which threatened the royal power of France, when, at the death of the aged Lewis XV. the administration was transmitted to three young princes, totally inexperienced in government. During the fifteen years of the reign of Lewis XVI. it would be in vain to look for any supports of the declining monarchy, when its chief pillars, the two brothers of the king, destroyed it in a double capacity; when one of them commenced his career by the abolition of all liberty, and finished it by establishing democracy; when the other began his,

by protecting the first efforts of freedom, and terminated it in the expiring convulsions of despotism, on the 14th of July; when, in fine, the eldest of the three, undecided and fluctuating, detached, with his own hand, every day a jewel from his crown, at the suggestion of Maurepas, Malesherbes, Turgot, Saint-Germain, Necker, and Calonne. It is the history of these strange substractions from the public authority, concentrated in the person of Lewis XVI. that has hitherto employed my attention: I shall soon proceed to relate what was done by the house of Orleans for abolishing the royal power.

The queen, the blind and passive instrument of the interests of the court of Vienna, acted the same part. A friend to liberty, from 1774, she could not but accelerate the social dissolution among us. An enemy to submissive parliaments, and devoted to those which were exiled, her influence terminated in France in 1789, when she professed the opposite sentiments, namely, those of despotism. Such then was the situation of Lewis XVI., from his accession to the crown to the convocation of the states-general, that he constantly found in the queen and his brothers, united or separate, two opposite opinions. In following the counsels of his consort and the count d'Artois, for re-

establishing a magistracy, which had betrayed a disposition refractory and seditious, he laid the foundation of a revolution. In pursuing, in 1788, the system of Monsieur, he gave to this revolution a consistency, which, in the following year, on the 14th of July, broke forth into an explosion.

CHAP. VII.

Portrait and Anecdotes of the House of Orleans—Portrait of the Duke of Orleans, Father of Egalité—Portrait of his Spouse. —He is enamoured of Madame de Montesson—His jealousy— Portrait of Madame de Montesson—He marries her privately.— Reasons of the Court of France for refusing to permit a solemn Marriage—Portrait of the Duke of Chartres, afterwards Duke of Orleans, and subsequently Philip Egalité—His Orgies—His Immorality—His Buildings of the Palais Royal—Portrait of his Spouse, of Madame de Sillery.—Considerations on the Conduct of the House of Orleans with regard to the Court of France.

LEWIS PHILIP, duke of Orleans, grandson of the regent and father of the celebrated revolutionist, was born at Versailles in 1725. He was married in 1743 to Louisa Henrietta de Conty, who left him a widower in 1759. He had been distractedly fond of his wife, and she of him, during the two first years of their marriage. In every quarter, a variety of anecdotes was told of the singular behaviour of this loving couple, at court, upon the beds of their friends on visits, and even in the gardens.

These conjugal gallantries were succeeded in a short time by the scandalous life of the duchess of Orleans, who carried her lasciviousness to all

the extent of the ancient empresses: she prostituted herself without shame or selection to the men of the court and city, through all ranks, from a prince of the blood to her coachman Lefranc; incurring, without a blush, the reputation of the Messalina of her age, and boasting of having deserved it. Tired of asking the solaces of love of men with whom she was acquainted, she indulged her insatiable appetite to such a degree, that she went in the evening into the old garden of the Palais Royal, soliciting the embraces of strangers.

In proportion as the duchess of Orleans debased the dignity of her name, her husband became more decent in his manners, and more moderate in his pleasures. Addicted to the love of women, like a prince of the house of Bourbon, and separated from his wife, he formed a connexion with madame de Villemomble, to whom he gave the estate of that name, situated near the castle of Rincy. Madame de Brossard, and Messrs. de St. Albin and de St. Far, were the fruits of this attachment. M. de St. Far bears in his countenance the features of the house of Bourbon. He has the manners of his father, the air of the great in the time of the monarchy, with the love of freedom hereditary in the house of Orleans; and people used to say of him and his brother, that they were the last of that house. They

are all that remain in France of the house of Bourbon, the two brothers having courageously sustained the scenes of the revolution.

The duke of Orleans, their father, was decent in his amours: he was the last prince of the house of Bourbon who had preserved the fashionable gallantry of the time of Lewis XIV. When he had reached the years of maturity, a celebrated woman captivated his affection. This was the beautiful marchioness de Montesson, whose maiden name was de la Haye. She was much admired for the beauty of her figure, her melodious voice, the variety of her personal accomplishments, her decent manners, the charms of her conversation, and her poetry, which has never been sold, a few volumes only having been printed for the use of her friends.

The public soon began to talk of the attachment of the duke of Orleans for madame de Montesson, who was not insensible to his passion; but with the high spirit of the last age, she was neither inclined to reject a prince, who could establish her fortune, and whom she could render happy, nor to be ashamed of an attachment with the Bourbons, so frequently short in its duration. Mutual love and esteem increased every day in proportion to the polite and respectful attention of the lovers; they both spoke

in concert the language of their reciprocal passion; while madame de Montesson accompanied with the harpsichord a most charming voice, which expressed in music the amorous sentiments of her heart.

The count de Guines obtruded into the happy situation enjoyed by the duke of Orleans. Procuring admission to the musical entertainments of madame de Montesson, he affected in public to regard her with a passion, which he did not really entertain, and expected to reap advantage by his hypocrisy, in artfully conducting the duke of Orleans into situations, which would rouse in his mind the pangs of jealousy. De Guines spared no pains to make the world believe, that if he had not yet fully succeeded in his amorous designs, he soon would accomplish them. The prince, in great affliction, made his complaints to the duke of Choiseul, at that time in great power, and intimately connected with the family of Orleans; communicating to him, as to a friend fertile in resources, the pain which he felt from the concerts of the count de Guines and his assiduities to madame de Montesson. This was the very effect which de Guines endeavoured to produce. Choiseul, who was quick in his decision in great as well as little affairs, assured the duke of Orleans, that he would lose no time in procuring him satisfaction. "I wish to rid

you of the uneasiness which the count de Guines gives you," said he to him; "but you do not know him, if you think there is any thing to dread from a rival of that kind. I grant that M. de Guines is artful and fertile in expedients for obtaining his purpose; but he is endowed with no quality that can give pleasure to madame de Montesson. He is totally destitute of power, and neither in that respect nor in any other can he ever become a rival of the first prince of the blood of the house of Bourbon. I shall send him, however, as embassador to London, and his departure shall take place in a very short time."

Soon after, a rival of another kind disturbed the happiness of the duke of Orleans. His son (M. Egalité) came forward and endeavoured to ingratiate himself with madame de Montesson. The duke of Chartres had not then that jaded countenance, which he contracted by his horse-racing, his travels, his unbounded libertinism, and his revolutionary agitations. He was young, well made in his person, and gallant and amiable, when he chose to appear so; but madame de Montesson, sensible to the homage paid her by his father, made a jest only of the assiduities of his son. The corrupter of the prince of Lamballe was not calculated to please her.

Both the court and capital knew the torments of the duke of Orleans, and the severity of the lady. This prince, infatuated with love, could never see the king or the duke of Choiseul, without renewing his request to be permitted to marry madame de Montesson. But the king laid down a rule, from which he never departed during his whole reign, of not suffering any of his natural children or those of the princes to be legitimated. Upon the same principle he prohibited the nobility of the kingdom from contracting marriages with the princes of the blood. The endless disputes between the legitimate princes, and the princes legitimated by Lewis XIV., the dangerous intrigues of the grand dauphin and madame de Maintenon, were the last examples which were cited for justifying the refusal of the king and his minister to the demand of the duke of Orleans. The blood-royal of the house of Bourbon was hitherto regarded as sacred; to aspire to mix with it, was considered as a political crime. On the side of Henry IV. the house of Bourbon was allied, in the south, to many houses of inferior nobility. The house of Bourbon did not acknowledge these alliances; and for a gentleman, not of great distinction, to make a merit of such an alliance, was sufficient to exclude him entirely from the favour of the court.

The ministry was likewise so much inclined to retain the duke of Orleans in a state of dependence, that Lewis XV. peremptorily refused to make madame de Montesson the first princess of the blood by a solemn marriage; obliging the duke of Orleans to content himself with a private marriage, for which the king gave a verbal commission, upon express condition, that, though the marriage was lawful as a conjugal union, it should never be considered in the same light with those of the princes of the blood, and should not be published.

Madame de Montesson had no inclination, either to act the part of the first princess of the blood, or to maintain with the princesses a dispute on the subject of etiquette, which was contrary to her disposition. Already habituated to an observance of the rules of decency with the duke of Orleans, she appeared to be content with marrying him in the same way as madame de Maintenon had married Lewis XIV. The archbishop of Paris, informed of the king's pleasure, granted to the parties the three dispensations respecting the publication of the bands. The chevalier Durfort, first gentleman of the chamber to the prince, in survivorship of the count de Pons, and Perigny, the friend of the prince, were the only witnesses of the marriage, which was performed by the abbé Pou-

part, curate of St. Eustace, in presence of M. de Beaumont, archbishop of Paris. On the day of ceremony, the duke of Orleans had a numerous court at Villers-Cotterets. On the eve and morning of the marriage, he had said to M. de Valençay, and his most intimate acquaintances, that he was on the point of entering into a state of happiness, which wanted nothing to complete it but to be known. The morning that he received, at Paris, the nuptial benediction, he said—"I leave the company, I shall return late; I shall not, however, return alone, but shall bring with me a person with whom you will share the attachment you entertain for my interests and person." The castle was the whole day in the greatest expectation. The duke of Orleans, without pronouncing the word *marriage*, gave sufficient indication of what had happened in the course of the day. At six o'clock in the afternoon he entered the saloon, amidst a numerous company, leading by the hand madame de Montesson, on whom all eyes were attentively fixed. The finest of her ornaments was her modesty. The whole company, for a moment, felt embarrassed. The marquis of Valençay advanced towards her, and, treating her with all the attention due to a princess of the blood, he performed the honours of the house, like a

man initiated in the mysteries of the morning. The hour of going to bed at length arrived.

It was the custom with the king, and in the house of the princes, that a nobleman of the first quality, receiving from the valet-de-chambre the shirt, should present it to the bridegroom going to his apartment. At court, the first prince of the blood enjoyed the prerogative of giving it to the king. Here it was presented by the first chamberlain.

It is said in one of madame Sevigne's letters, dated the 17th of January 1680, "That, in the marriages of the royal family, the new married couple was put to bed, and that shirts were given by the king and queen. When Lewis XIV. had given the shirt to the prince of Conty, and the queen to the princess, the king embraced her tenderly when she was in bed, and begged of her not to dispute with the prince of Conty about any thing, but to be mild and obedient."

At the marriage of the duke of Orleans, the ceremony of the shirt was performed nearly in this manner. At first there was a little embarrassment. The duke of Orleans and the marquis of Valençay temporised for a while, the one before receiving it, and the other after it was given. There was in the duke of Orleans the amiable reserve of a man who was

temperate in the chastest enjoyments. Valençay at last presented it to the prince, who, in taking off the shirt which he had worn in the day, as far as the middle of his body, exhibited to the company the spectacle of nakedness, conformably to the rules of the most brilliant gallantry of the time. The princes and the great never consummated marriages, nor received the first favours of a mistress, till after this preliminary operation. The news of the fact passed in a moment from the chamber to the rest of the palace, and no more doubt was entertained of the marriage of the duke of Orleans with madame de Montesson, which had been opposed by so many interests and incidents.

The duke of Orleans, from the time of his marriage, lived in a state of the greatest intimacy and cordiality with his spouse. She behaved to him, in public, with all the deference which was customary towards the first prince of the blood. She called him "my lord," spoke with respect to the princesses of the blood, and always gave them the precedency. She preserved the name of the widow of M. de Montesson; but she was called, by her husband, "madame de Montesson," or simply "madame," and sometimes "my wife," according to circumstances. He named her in this manner when he was among his friends. At night, on quit-

ing the company, he was often heard to say, "My wife, shall we soon go to bed?". Her excellent character was for a long time the happiness of the prince and of herself. Her amusements were music and the chase, in the pleasures of which she partook with the prince. She had a theatre in the hotel at Antin, where she used to perform with him. The duke of Orleans, a plain and unaffected man, succeeded in the part of a peasant, and madame de Montesson in those of a shepherdess or nymph in love. The late duchess of Orleans had prostituted that house to such a degree, that ladies came thither with the greatest reserve, and always well attended. Madame de Montesson re-established in it good order, decorum, delicate pleasures, a taste for the arts, wit, and frequently gaiety and good humour.

In a period of general depravity, and in an age, when the court of France no longer knew its dignity or its rank, madame de Montesson had raised that of the duke of Orleans to a level with the manners of Lewis XIV., choosing, from among the titled nobility, or those of the first quality, whoever was most distinguished for delicacy and talents. She kept at a distance from her court all who occupied themselves with dangerous intrigues, politics, a parade of learning, economy, or devotion. She formed a

select court, which supported for many years the house of Orleans in a state of dignity and splendor, and made the conduct of the late duchess of Orleans be forgotten. She rendered her palace, and the country of Ste. Assise, the habitation of the agreeable arts, the mild and peaceful passions. The immense fortune of the first prince of the blood furnished her with the means in abundance.

The best part ever performed by madame de Montesson was that of moderating, by the sole means of wisdom, prudence, and dissimulation, the depraved disposition of the duke of Chartres. Eradicating his jealousy by acts of beneficence, she prevailed upon the duke of Orleans, many years before his death, to resign to his son the Palais Royal, and retain to himself a kind of pension. The son, so well known for his avarice, remained, nevertheless, insensible to this benefit, which he owed to madame de Montesson. Born to relish pleasures of a gross or atrocious nature, he could not endure that his father should be united to a woman who ensured to him the esteem of the French, at that time so sensible to the popularity manifested by this prince even in the bonds of marriage. This unnatural son afterwards carried his resentment so far, as to hinder the publication of the funeral oration on his father, in

which the marriage with madame de Montesson was mentioned as a praise-worthy action.

The duke of Chartres (Egalité) entered upon the stage of the world at the age of sixteen years, under the auspices of a governor, the count de Pons St. Maurice, a man of ordinary genius, but of a good disposition, and very far removed from the danger of being either corrupted himself or of corrupting others. But the prince listened to the inferior persons employed in his education, who led him in the way of prostitution instead of that of virtue. An abandoned woman, of the name of Deschamps, was the first they introduced to corrupt him. From the arms of this woman he passed into those of the most celebrated prostitutes, frequenting the public brothels, which surrounded his palace. He shared his pleasures with the prince of Lamballe, only son of the duke of Penthièvre, whose daughter he was desirous of marrying. The Parisians conceived from that moment such a contempt for the conduct and character of the duke of Chartres, that they accused him of having, with his infamous women, seduced, prostituted, and poisoned, the prince of Lamballe, with the view of uniting, in the person of mademoiselle de Penthièvre, the whole succession of the house, with the reversion of the place of high-admiral, held by the duke of

Penthièvre. And when, after the 10th of August, the fury of the Orleanists had sacrificed the princess of Lamballe, the Parisians repeated, that the duke of Chartres had killed the husband of that princess, with the view of obtaining the estate, and then murdered the wife, that he might come into possession of the annual pensions with which the estate was charged. The duke of Chartres had, in fact, succeeded in marrying mademoiselle de Penthièvre; and the court and city agreed in declaring, that as all the virtues were united in this princess, so all the vices and all the errors were combined in the mind and heart of her husband. When united to this woman, who was equally virtuous and beautiful, the duke of Chartres continued to lead the life of a libertine; to ramble through all the houses of debauchery in the capital, and to order extravagant and licentious suppers. He had no relish for the pleasures of marriage; the most abominable orgies were alone his delight. He had erected, in the neighbourhood of Paris, a temple to prostitution, where his court indulged themselves in the most abandoned profligacy. He named this polluted place, "the follies of Chartres." Hither were conducted, under the shades of night, with their eyes hood-winked, prostitutes, of the most impudent, rather than of the most tempting description; and they were

sometimes brought in a troop, amounting from a hundred to a hundred and fifty. They found on their arrival a splendid repast, of which they were obliged to partake quite naked; and when hot wines, liquors, and high-seasoned aliments had thrown these women into the state of the Bacchanalians of antiquity, they fell down drunk into the arms, promiscuously, of lacqueys of the duke of Orleans, his own, and those of the company. In summer, the heat of the weather gave life to these frantic orgies; in winter, large fires, lighted in the banqueting-halls, produced the same effect.

He was reproached with these shameful revels in 1784, in some pamphlets published by M. de V——, who had to accuse himself of having often shared in the disgrace. "One day," says he, "I was in one of the fine parties of the duke of Chartres: we were all stark naked, as was likewise our chief; but that did not hinder us from doing honour to the repast. When this was ended, the prince gave the signal for every man to take his pleasure in his own way. Benches, stools, armed chairs, bergères, sophas, and ottomanes, in an instant were occupied; and my lord, walking up and down in this motley scene, sighed with compassion at the weaknesses of poor humanity."

The duke of Chartres testified his friendship

for those to whom he was particularly attached by treating them with festivals of this kind. He invited to them indifferently both men and women. The most celebrated courtezans, mademoiselle Michelot, and mademoiselle Duthé, found themselves mere novices to the spirit and occupation of these strange spectacles.

At other times the prince took a diversion, which he shared with the most noted libertines in the capital; he laid bets with them, under the auspices of a god, whose name is never mentioned in good company. In the extraordinary attitudes in which he put himself, he received the vows, the offerings, and the sacrifices of the companions of his orgies, passing his jokes on their impure libations.

He contrived in a little time to multiply these orgies, by calling to his assistance the genius of the arts, and the invention of the ablest mechanics. He placed in an apartment of the Palais Royal, allotted for his pleasures, some naked figures in relief, to which he prescribed the sports of love and all its variety of enjoyments. Invisible machines, made obsequious to command, inflamed the passions of the assistants.

The duke of Chartres was entirely indifferent whether the public knew or not the scandalous anecdotes here recited. He one day laid a bet

at Versailles, that he would return to the Palais Royal quite naked on horseback at full gallop. The companions of his pleasures were the first to blush at this public indecency: they conjured him to begin the enterprise, not by setting off from Versailles, but from his stables. Other companions of his debauchery, taking up the bet, swore that he would not even set off from his stables: Chartres gained the wager.

It is to the duke of Chartres that our young nobility are indebted for the fashion of retaining in their service handsome jockeys, whom they have picked up from the dregs of the populace, in the vilest parts of Paris, to bring them up as obsequious instruments of their pleasures. It was he who gave rise to the associations of a number of young libertines, whose sole employment was to consult together about devising some new abomination. Having thus become the equal and companion of all sorts of bad subjects, a report was spread, that he was in compact with the most celebrated courtezans: they accused him of profiting by the expences of the duke of Artois by means of Sylphe, who waited on mademoiselle Duthé; they affirmed, that he profited equally by the sums which the prince of Soubise gave to the famous Michelon; and that he formed intimate connexions with unexperienced noblemen, who had the folly to ruin

themselves by making "fine parties" with the duke.

The famous lucrative speculation of the Palais Royal in a short time excited the whole capital against him. His garden, as may be remembered, was surrounded with handsome houses, the value of which chiefly arose from the view of the entrances to it. The duke of Chartres formed the project of surrounding it by buildings, which would have the advantage of that prospect; hence arose the great work of the galleries of the Palais Royal, which obstructed the view of the surrounding houses. The proprietors joined together, and maintained against him the famous suit, which he gained in spite of the public clamour and the complaints of all France, which was filled with indignation at beholding such covetousness in a prince. His father reproached him with it, and said to him one day, that "holding the next rank to the king in the monarchy, he was surprised that he should employ himself in a manner so unbecoming his birth." The duke of Chartres had formed his resolution: a crown-piece, he said, was more valuable to him than the esteem of the public. It was said, that he had conceived a design of allotting an apartment in his buildings to the purpose of prostitution, and rendering it the

central point of all that was obscene and vicious in the capital. Every kind of abandoned libertinism was here established under his eyes, and rendered secure from legal prosecution by the privileges annexed to the place. In a short time this seat of prostitution was so well provided with every thing that could contribute to the pleasures of an easy, indolent, and profligate life, that within the same walls there were tennis-courts, places for gaming, brothels, lycæums, literary cabinets, and every kind of amusements. In the history of immoralities, the following anecdote ought not to be omitted.

The year 1789 was the chief epoch of the revolutionary licentiousness of this famous palace, and the public were invited to come and see two savages, lately arrived in the capital. This was nothing more than a hairy man, laid in an hammock made at Paris, and who, in the presence of the spectators, indulged himself in the pleasures of marriage.

The duke of Chartres was in person well made, and was fond of violent amusements and daring enterprises. In 1778, travelling into Lower Brittany, he descended into the mines to the depth of five hundred feet. Some years after he mounted in a balloon to the height of five

hundred toises, and wished to make a voyage in the air with an aëronaut.

He was fond of the arts and of mechanics: he had collected in a cabinet the instruments of all trades in miniature; and had, in relief, a representation of all the machinery in the manufactories at Lyons: he loved to be foremost in great enterprises relative to building. He had conceived the grand and sublime project of throwing down all the houses in the city of Paris, and rebuilding them upon a new plan. He was in the habit of going to London in quest of race-horses, to procure himself the reputation of a fine rider: he would lay wagers, that such a horse would run so far in an hour, or that he would carry away the prize from another horse: he had even prevailed upon Maria Antoinetta to assist and preside at these courses, till the king, to whom they were extremely disagreeable, desired she would give them up. Maria Antoinetta, who often degraded, instead of improving the usages of the court, took it into her head to make a parody upon them: she ordered several races of asses, in which she once distinguished herself by a fall.

The duke of Chartres, the most remarkable man in the kingdom for an attachment to Eng-

lish fashions, in this respect in opposition with the spirit of the court, went often to London, where he purchased property, and became a member of many clubs: he was expelled from them, however, after the 10th of August, by the prince of Wales, who at last became ashamed of the fraternity.

The virtues, that are in direct opposition to the vices of the duke of Chartres, were united in the person of his spouse. Educated in the school of the virtuous duke of Penthièvre, she had the delicacy, the agreeable qualities, the prudence and modesty of that prince. She supported, with a great deal of constancy, the infidelities and libertinism of her husband, never ceasing to love him, and to tell him of it, till the very moment when, arrived at the height of revolutionary intoxication, he mingled himself with the horde of banditti, among whom he met his death. Madame d'Orleans beheld, without a murmur, the scandalous life of this prince with madame de Buff—, and contented herself with remonstrating to him tenderly on the subject; but with respect to madame de Sillery she was not equally patient. When this lady, to whom the prince had entrusted the education of his children, had manifested her revolutionary sentiments; when they were informed at the house of Penthièvre of her principles with regard to the first con-

stitution, the court of France, and the first revolutionists; when the duke of Orleans had declared, that he would persevere in entrusting his children to this governess, whose principles the duchess knew to be adverse to the established government of France, she departed from the bounds of her usual moderation, she withdrew her countenance from madame de Sillery, and expressed very unfavourable sentiments concerning her. She said, on the contrary, of madame de Buff—, that she could not be indifferent to a woman who loved her husband so sincerely. But because madame de Sillery educated the princes in jacobinical sentiments, she made to her husband respectful declarations on the dangers of such a measure: to which madame de Sillery replied, by writing to the duke of Orleans, that he was the most patient of husbands.

CHAP. VIII.

The Province of Bretany tampered with by the Agents of England — Privileges of this Province annihilated by the Revolution in the Magistracy—Chiefs of the Malcontents send a deputation to the Duke of Orleans, Father of Philip Egalité, offering him the Crown, and an Army paid by England— Noble Answer of the Duke of Orleans.—The English continue their hostile and secret Projects against the Repose of the House of Bourbon.

ENGLAND, being informed, that, ever since the peace in 1763, France had maintained a secret correspondence with the Americans, employed herself likewise in a project of exciting a revolution amongst us. Lewis XV. was acquainted at an early period, that England, was no stranger to the revolt of the magistracy. This was at that time the only body in France susceptible of fermentation: M. de Maupeou suppressed it.

Bretany had in all times been tampered with by the emissaries of England. The detail of the discontents in that province is sufficiently well known; but the public is yet to be informed, that at the moment when France was most agitated against the revolution effected by

M. de Maupeou, the duke of Orleans was witness to the arrival, at Villers-Cotteret, of a deputation of six of the mal-contents of this province; who declared to him, in the provincial accent of the country, that their province, enraged against king Lewis XV., was disposed to a general insurrection. They added, that "their insurrection would be conducted by some chiefs, who had conceived the plan of dethroning the Sardanapalus that reigned at Versailles, who sent into exile their princes of the blood, who stripped the magistracy of their offices, their property, and liberty, who violated the treaty of union between Bretany and France, and forcibly ravished from a whole province, which had voluntarily united itself, the privileges, the laws, and conditions of the social compact." They declared, that they were resolved to take cognizance of the duke of Aiguillon, the ancient commandant of their province, for his exactions and tyranny, and would exert every effort to ensure their revolution, provided that he, the first prince of the blood, remaining a passive spectator during this revolution, would consent to quit his state of exile, and suffer himself to be crowned by forty thousand Bretons, whose pay was agreed on.

The duke of Orleans, whose disposition was averse to violent measures, entertained too strong

a passion for the peaceful arts, and the tranquil pleasures of his court, to listen to the language of a province, the irritability of which was always known to be transient; and though under the disgrace of exile, he treated with reserve the deputies of Bretany, and told them, that " he had the honour to be first prince of the blood, and that with this title he would die."

These deputies then cast their eyes on the duke of Chartres. It is the same party of malcontents that since founded, in the month of September 1789, at Versailles, the Breton club, named at Paris, after the 5th of October, " the club of jacobins."

Marshal Richelieu, who furnished this anecdote, knew not of the negotiation carried on with the son of the first prince of the blood; but it has been understood, that, subsequent to this transaction, the people of Bretany and the duke of Chartres maintained a correspondence, which the court of Versailles constantly opposed. The English were accessary to these cabals. The re-establishment of the magistracy neither moderated nor converted either the people of Bretany or the duke of Chartres.

The king, however, desirous of pacifying the province of Bretany, sent the duke of Penthièvre to take upon him the administration in that quarter. This prince was much beloved in the

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province, and had a considerable party in it. The duke of Chartres, thinking that he might accompany his father-in-law thither, solicited the king's consent; but the count de Vergennes suggested to the king, that the prince had no other view in going to Bretany than to intrigue with the malcontents, and traverse the pacific system and projects of his relation. Lewis XVI. refused permission to his making the journey, by telling him, that it was so short a while since he had been re-united in an amicable intercourse with him, that he could not think of acquiescing in a separation so soon. He gave orders for negotiating with M. de la Chalotais, who had been persecuted by the late king, and endeavoured to counteract the efforts of the English party, by treating with the magistrates, whose misfortunes had excited an insurrection in the province against his grandfather.

The riot, in consequence of the high price of corn, of which an account is given in the present work, broke out; and the English continued, by secret practices, to foment the discord. Though the court was never perfectly acquainted with the depth of this revolt, which had for its object an attack upon the rich, the commercial part of the community, and the government, yet it knew enough to be persuaded of the the necessity of making reprisals, by favouring

on its part the insurrection of the colonies, which had for a long time been irritated against England. The king resolved to declare a secret and intestine war against the English, as soon as he was convinced, that they encouraged the disturbances in Bretany, and the riot of the people in the affair of 1776.

CHAP. IX.

First Dissatisfaction of the Court of France with regard to the House of Orleans—The Exile of the Duke of Choiseul, and the Ruin of the Parliaments in 1771, bring on likewise the Disgrace of the Family of Orleans—Reason of the Queen for still adhering to the House of Orleans on account of the Duke of Choiseul—Secret Resentment of Lewis XVI.—Disgrace of the Marquis of V———, a principal Personage in the Party of Orleans—the Son of Melfort accuses the Orleans' Party of Projects of Conspiracy.—Character of the King in these Circumstances.—Affliction of the Marquis of V——. His Portrait and Character—His Connexions with the Chiefs of the Opposition in England—His Rupture with the Duke of Chartres does not reconcile him with the Court of France—He dies, in consequence, of Chagrin.

THE marquis of V——, created lieutenant-general of the armies on the 5th of November 1758, had been the favourite of Lewis XV. Son of the war-minister of that name, nephew of the minister of foreign affairs, grandson of the celebrated keeper of the seals in the time of the regent, his family a long time in credit at court had enjoyed another advantage, that of being attached to the house of Orleans, both by sentiment and duty, having occupied, ever since the regency, the place of chancellor to the dukes of Orleans,

The house of Orleans gave no umbrage to the court of Lewis XV. before the affairs of the parliament. The duke of Orleans, the richest proprietor in France, in the class of subjects, and even more opulent than many of the European monarchs, employed his fortune in the cultivation of the arts, and in the enjoyment of all sorts of pleasure; but at the epoch of the exile of the duke of Choiseul, and chiefly that of the insurrection of the princes of the blood against the revolution of the magistracy in 1771, the marquis of V——, and a number of other considerable noblemen, partook the disgrace of the house of Orleans. They were removed from their employments, and were marked at court from that time by the title of "the party of Orleans;" the first germ of the revolutionaries, who were one day to prove the ruin of the court and the kingdom. We never lose sight of this party through the course of these memoirs.

The duke of Chartres, become indolent and insignificant after the return of the parliament, made himself famous by the extravagance and the nature of his pleasures. The party of the court, which was never effectually reconciled to the house of Orleans, had at its head the king himself, who, during the whole of his life, manifested a contempt or coolness towards the

duke of Chartres. Lewis had been prepossessed against the family of Orleans by the memoirs of the late dauphin, who, sole presumptive heir of the crown, had constantly watched the behaviour of this house, whose pretensions called them to the throne, in case of the death of the only son of Lewis XV. The devotion of the duke of Choiseul to this family having increased the inquietude and suspicions of the dauphin, he left his opinions and sentiments as a legacy to his son, in different memoirs composed for his particular instruction on this head. The duke of Chartres no sooner understood the disposition of Lewis XVI. towards him, than he endeavoured to prevent the possible consequences of it, by enticing the count d'Artois to his parties of pleasure and his sumptuous suppers, with the view of corrupting, through his means, the queen, whose attachment to the duke of Choiseul rendered her hitherto favourable to the family of Orleans, and suspected by the party of the chancellor Maupeou.

The nature of the orgies of the duke of Chartres had brought upon him the imputation of having destroyed the prince of Lamballe, with the view of extinguishing the male line of the dukes of Penthièvre, and marrying the heiress of that family; and he was now accused of an

attempt upon the mind of the queen and the count d'Artois, whom he wished to seduce, to plunge them in pleasures, and effect an impotency, to the future benefit of his own family. The chancellor Maupeou made no scruple of thus publicly speaking of him.

The marquis of V——, admitted to these orgies, was distinguished in them by "his perversity," says one of his intimate friends, in his manuscript memoirs which I have consulted. Lewis XVI., secretly grieved at the connexion of his consort with the chief of this party and the count d'Artois, never forgave either the duke of Chartres, or his strange companions in pleasure, for this kind of conduct. The marquis of V—— was particularly the object of his resentment. Lewis never could imagine that a nobleman of such distinguished reputation, that a military man, who wanted only the brevet of a marshal of France, which was promised him, to arrive at the height of honours; in fine, that a man sixty years of age, should consent to preside at parties of pleasure the most infamous and detestable. Lewis XVI. resolved to ruin him; and such was the peculiar character of his resentments, that he was desirous of doing it in the most public manner. There were likewise other reasons, which aggravated the passion of the king: the marquis

of V—— was the nobleman the most remarkable in the Orleans party, by the importance of his name, his extraordinary stature, the elegance of his figure, the distinguished qualities of his mind, the views of his ambition, and the variety of his knowledge, both of a civil and military kind.

He possessed every endowment necessary to the private and inostensible head of a party. His habits and his secret connexions with men in England, distinguished by their birth, or by the authority which they had in the affairs of their country, were to Lewis XVI. an additional cause of umbrage and anxiety. The house of Orleans and England were two objects which constantly occupied his observation. The marquis of Rockingham, the intimate friend of the marquis of V——, was at the head of a very powerful party in London, and laboured to produce for his interest a change in the ministry, in which he at length succeeded. The king regarded that Englishman and the marquis in no other light than as two conspirators, who endeavoured to obtain possession of power. He was kept in these fears by the count de Vergennes and M. de Maurepas, who were uneasy at the frequent visits which M. de V—— made to London, being little enlightened by the reports of their emissaries with regard to the connexions

he had formed there. Lord Shelburne was another friend of the marquis of V——. Lewis XVI. understood that he aspired to the place of prime minister, which in reality he afterwards became. The court of France felt extraordinary jealousy and disquietude with regard to the Orleans party, entertaining an opinion, that it meditated the destruction of the reigning house, for which reason this party was always excluded from high offices and places of trust.

The marquis of V——, finding himself obnoxious to the king on account of his connexion with the Orleans party, determined on doing every thing to propitiate him. He was one of the foremost candidates for a marshal's staff, and it was difficult not to be influenced by the view of that promotion, like many other lords of the court and party of the duke of Chartres, of whom the minister manifested his suspicions, by removing them from their employments. He retired to his castle of Ormes, in Touraine, where he commanded in quality of lieutenant-general, employing himself in agriculture, and instituting a stud for the breeding of horses equal to any in England.

The support of this establishment, which he had formed with royal magnificence, might be regarded as a branch of administration highly

interesting for the protection and improvement of the French cavalry, upon the plan which he had conceived. He came to Paris in the winter, to give an account of his official inspections; and, within the limits of his command, he had occupied himself in introducing useful regulations respecting the ports and the military guard along the coasts, as well as in the making of high roads, and in doing every thing advantageous to the interests of the king in an extensive province, in expectation of being promoted to the rank he wished, and which he merited both by his great abilities and services.

To effect this purpose, and disarm the secret displeasure of Lewis XVI., the marquis of V—— thought it necessary to join in open rupture with the duke of Chartres; but such was the character of the king, that this rupture produced the effect of rendering him odious to that party, without procuring him the good will of the king. The duke of Chartres, having, some months before, obtained from his father the resignation of the *Palais Royal*, engaged in a lucrative speculation in buildings, which excited against him the resentment of a hundred proprietors in the neighbourhood, whom he offended by erecting galleries all round the garden, and thereby obstructing the

prospect which they formerly had from their houses. The general insurrection of these proprietors against the duke of Chartres is in the memory of every one. This prince accused the marquis of V—— of having excited them against him. The marquis, in fact, disapproved of the duke of Chartres' plan, and said to him with his usual freedom, "Do you know, my lord, that your high consideration depends partly on the grand walk of the Palais Royal, which you are going to destroy." The marquis held the house which he occupied, in the verge of the garden, of the generosity of the duke of Orleans, on account of the services of his ancestors in the family of the prince. The duke of Chartres returned for answer, that he was at liberty to quit the house, if it did not suit him without the view of the garden. "Very well," replied the marquis of V——, "but you must be answerable to my family for the money expended in a journey made by my father into Germany, for negotiating a marriage contracted by yours with the princess of Baden." This house had been given him as an indemnification by the grandfather of the duke of Chartres. The prince and the marquis parted from each other in a rage.

This quarrel did not regain to the marquis the favour of Lewis XVI,; because, as there

were at the court of the duke of Chartres some deceitful individuals, who served both parties, that of the minister, and that of the house of Orleans, it was suggested to Lewis XVI. that the dispute between the duke and the marquis of V—— was mere dissimulation. The connexions of the prince and marquis with England still subsisted, and the king's resentment, which had a long time been smothered, broke forth.

The marquis of V——, being one day at the castle of Marli, where his name was written in the list of those who were to sup with the king, a splendid and numerous court, assembled on the occasion in the saloon, stood round the person of the king, who made an experiment on the insignificant duke of Fronsac, despised by all the world, of the harsh and severe language which he wished to employ against the marquis of V——. "M. de Fronsac," said he to him, "you are a little, ugly, ill-shaped fellow; you gain money here from every body, and in the mean time you see that every body detests you." The king, then turning about to the marquis of V——, "You will not deny," said he to him, "that you likewise are very fond of money, and that money is a fine thing."— "Sire," replied the marquis, "money is a good thing as a mean; as an ultimate object, nothing is more despicable."—"I care not

whether you regard it as an ultimate object or a mean," answered the king; "but, in order to procure it, you become a horse-jockey, a post-master, and perform in the province the office of a notary." The king then entered into conversation with the prince of Poix. The marquis of V——, in a fit of desperation, immediately went to M. de Maurepas, who advised him not to appear at supper, notwithstanding he had been invited, and besought him to request of the king a mitigation of behaviour towards him and a favourable reception. Lewis XVI. was inexorable; and it is perhaps the first time that he ever displayed such energy of character. In the evening the courtiers spread a report in the city, that the king had given the *báton* to the marquis of V——. The marquis retired to his province, where he employed himself in the project of draining the marsh of Rochefort, and making a canal, to remedy the inconvenience of the harbour, which did not allow ships to be fitted out, except in the road. Disgraced in the two courts, of the king and the duke of Chartres, the English party, with whom the marquis of V—— had formed connexions, produced a revolution in London. His friend, the marquis of Rockingham, and Lord Shelburne, were made ministers. The marquis of V—— offered to M.

de Vergennes some useful information relative to the character of this new ministry, and the means of bringing about a peace. He found friends, who spoke on the subject to M. de Vergennes and M. de Segur, and at the same time gave the most favourable representation of his talents and services. The two ministers informed the king of the overture made by the marquis of V——. The king, still inflexible, gave permission, however, to the two ministers to inform the marquis of V——, as from him, that the affair at Marli should be no obstacle to his promotion, that he should succeed to the first vacancy of the *cordon bleu*, and should not be disappointed with regard to his prospect of obtaining the rank of a marshal of France. Baron Menou, who was not only a man of a liberal disposition, but of conciliatory talents, undertook the charge of communicating this agreeable information to the marquis of V——. He found him at his country-seat, overwhelmed with sorrow, and at the point of death. He expired in his arms at the castle of Ormes. The nephew, relation, son, and grandson of four ministers; occupied, during his whole life, with endeavours to promote his advancement; born with an ambition well supported, of a character not the most complying, his attachment to the house of Orleans was the source of his dis-

grace; his quarrels with that house were productive of no advantage to his interests, and their orgies alienated from him for ever the favour of the monarch.

The Orleans party, from that day, calculated what it had to fear and to hope from Lewis XVI. An attachment to the first prince of the blood appeared sufficient to insure an exclusion from the favours of the court. It has since been known, that the count de Melfort, whose father cohabited with the duchess of Orleans, mother of Philip Egalité, has revealed in a note (which is among the papers of Lewis XVI., with a similar declaration by the marquis of A——), that there were held at the house of the marquis of V—— assemblies of conspirators, who plotted together for the destruction of the royal family. The king the more readily believed it, as the young count de Melfort, who was an officer in the guards, and very much attached to his person, was nearly new on the mother's side to the marquis of ——. But whether these ambitious intrigues and conspiracies have ever really existed, or been only suspected only, these anecdotes prove sufficiently the mutual distrust of the king and the family Orleans.

CHAP. X.

Portrait of the Prince of Condé, the Prince of Conty, and the Duke of Penthièvre, Contemporaries of Lewis XVI.

IT appears from all that has been said, that the house of Orleans affected in general, an opposition repugnant to the despotism of the court.

The house of Condé, implicitly submissive to every act of power, displayed a character quite the reverse; and yet, though the French were already very much disposed to favour the spirit of opposition which actuated the family of Orleans, I have seen the prince of Condé treated with much more consideration than the duke of Chartres.

We allowed this sentiment, under the ancient government, towards the great, who were ambitious of deserving, and to those who maintained a proper dignity and reserve in their actions: we refused it to princes who betrayed a want of liberality in their conduct, and of fidelity in their intercourse with the world. The greater they were, we expected from them a degree of dignity in proportion. We were republicans under the monarchy, for the same reason, that, under the

republic, a troop of banditti has obliged us to call to remembrance the manners of the former period. We refused then all consideration to the duke of Chartres; and when he had once erected those famous galleries, which still continue to annoy the proprietors of the neighbourhood, excluded from a view of the pleasant garden, then become the most delightful part of Paris, and the chosen residence of all who lived in ease, opulence, and pleasure, he might well become interesting to those who wished for a revolution in France; but he was never in the eyes of the people either a generous or loyal prince. We ranked him in a class of princes of gross and indecent avarice; and such was the exquisite sensibility of the French in this circumstance, that the duke of Chartres, mean in his private conduct, and generous in his politics, acquired nothing but the public contempt, for the inconsistency which he unblushingly displayed between his principles and actions.

A plan of politics and conduct directly opposite to the former, was the rule of the prince of Condé; and as this plan was conformable to his birth, the world could not justly condemn him for being what he was born, the support of the royal authority. His popularity arose from nothing either vulgar or coarse. He formed to himself a society of men of letters and wit, composed of persons of great merit. The count de

la Touraille, Champfort, Grouvelle, Desormeaux, Valmont de Bomare, Saint Alphonse, &c. &c. assembled at the palace of Bourbon, and dined with him once a week. This palace and Chantilly were become the residence of pure pleasures, and of arts instructive and agreeable. These periodical meetings had given the prince of Condé great consideration. The literary men whom I have mentioned, were neither the adherents of a party, nor maintained any principles destructive of the ancient national institutions. My friend Latouraille, very little known and cruelly sacrificed by the tyrants on the 8th Thermidor of the year 2, (26 July, 1793) was facetious, witty, the friend of Voltaire, a poet not much distinguished, but with talents natural and agreeable. Champfort is sufficiently known to the public. Grouvelle carried into that society a mind wise and delicate. The intelligent and picturesque Desormeaux, and a man the most learned of all that I have known in the history of the five last ages of our monarchy, Valmont of Bomare, who had taught natural history to three generations, rendered this society extremely interesting. Valmont had created at Chantilly, at the expence of the prince, one of the finest cabinets in the world. Literature, natural philosophy, and history, were animated by the advantages which accrued from the superiority and opulence of a prince of the blood.

The prince of Condé acquired a reputation from his youth in the seven-years-war. Some remarkable instances are related of his bravery at the battle of Hastenbeck. It is said, that when urged to go twelve paces to the left, for the purpose of avoiding the direction of a battery which made a terrible havock close to him, he replied to M. de la Touraille, "I meet with none of these precautions in the history of the great Condé."

He distinguished himself afterwards at the battle of Minden, in 1759, at the head of his reserve, charging the enemy upon a spot of ground strewed with the dead bodies of the *gendarmerie* and the carbineers. His talents became more conspicuous when he commanded a separate corps of troops, with which he gained several advantages over the prince of Brunswic. Lewis XV. in recompence, made him a present of the cannon taken from the enemy; and the duke of Brunswic having since paid him a visit at Chantilly, and not finding the cannon, which the prince of Condé had caused to be withdrawn from his sight, "You seem inclined," said he, "to conquer me twice; in war by your arms, and in peace by your modesty." The battle of Johannesberg carried his reputation to the highest pitch. With an inferior body of reserve, he obtained a complete

victory over prince Ferdinand. He had held a council of war in the midst of a terrible fire of musketry, and kept firm on the field of battle, which was yielded to him *.

Such was the prince of Condé during the age of military activity. Twenty-five years having since elapsed, in gallantry, effeminacy, and the intrigues of a court, have changed the manners of this prince, whom history will, however, represent as the last captain of the house of Bourbon. Condé afterwards was no more than a courtier, as unsuccessful in his intrigues at the palace, as in his knight-errant expeditions against the French revolution; for we behold

* I had these military anecdotes from the count de la Touraille, his gentleman and friend. It is from his prison at Luxembourg that he sent these anecdotes to Geneva, written with his own hand.

"3 Thermidor, Year 2. (21 July, 1793.)

"I send you, my dear resident, the notes respecting the P. "of C. which I promised you more than six years ago. I would "not die without fulfilling my promise. I write them from "the depth of my prison. They are not very particular; but "I have exerted all my strength to give them you, and preserve "myself from breaking my word. Under violent pain, the me- "mory is disordered; but happier times will permit you to "write the history. The nation will be inclined to have "masters who will suffer it to be written impartially. The "nation will obtain them. I have reason to expect that you "will make use of my note. You will be able one day to "write, that I was a good Frenchman, like yourself, and "that the P. of C. was worthy of his blood and name."

him wandering ever since 1792, at the head of an insignificant troop. What a difference there is between those generals, who retrieve the French constitution at the head of our armies, and this prince of the house of Bourbon, who lets perish every day the last troops of the monarchy!

The prince of Conty, though he has long finished his career, deserves to be mentioned in these Memoirs. Supported by madame de Châteauroux, who wished to make him a king of Poland; head of the private correspondence of the late king, the port-folio of which he left to marshal Broglio; detested by madame de Pompadour, who could neither subdue his high spirit, make him one of her courtiers, nor bend his character; he was at the head of all the oppositions of the ancient parliaments against the edicts of the court. He retained in his pay and caressed men of letters, who furnished him with historical notes on the rights of the nation against the military power of the kings; he attended with delight to their memoirs, and they obtained authority and importance by proceeding from his mouth. Disgraced at court, for having taken a decided part in the affairs of the parliament, he grew old at Isle-Adam, but still displayed all the energy of youth, when any obstacle was to be put in the way of absolute power. Find-

ing death approach, he ordered a leaden coffin to be made, of dimensions to fit his body, and he very often tried it. Confined in this narrow receptacle, he used to jest upon his approaching destiny, which he awaited with composure. He wished to close his days with the study of astronomy, in which M. de Cassini gave him some lessons. The curate of the commandery of the Temple, wishing to make him receive the sacrament, offered to assist him so effectually in the examination of his conscience, that he would have nothing more to do than to express by a signal either his affirmation or negative. He died in 1776, as an infidel philosopher, on a close-stool.

The duke de Penthièvre, the last of the race of legitimated princes, who had conducted so many intrigues against the legitimate princes, under the reign of Lewis XIV. their author, and during the regency of the duke of Orleans, was of a character very opposite. He was distinguished by an extreme good-nature, the politeness of his manners, the timidity of his conduct, and, above all, by the re-union in his person of every mild and peaceful virtue. He spent his life in exercises of piety, and he employed a part of his great revenues in acts of charity, for the most part unknown and carefully concealed. Instead of opposing the royal authority, or even the parties which manifested

themselves in France in favour of liberty, the duke of Penthièvre endeavoured to reconcile them. After having learned the sad catastrophe of his daughter-in-law, madame de Lamballe, and particularly that of Lewis XVI., for whom he had great veneration, this prince died of grief, on one of his estates, where he was adored.

REIGN OF LEWIS XVI.

FIRST EPOCH;

OR

The Recall of COUNT *de* MAUREPAS *to the Administration.*

" They moved from many different points towards one end, as yet vague and indefinite; but all the movements proceeded from a discontent with their present situation, and a general desire of innovation.

" As long, however, as the people, shut up within the narrow circle of their habitual sentiments, did not step beyond these bounds, it was easy for the government to have maintained its authority over the restless and reasoning class of society, and to have stopped it in its progress from speculative ideas to resolution and action."

NECKER *on the French Revolution*, sect. 1. vol. 1.

CHAP. XI.

History of the Recall of the Count de Maurepas to the Administration.—Opposite Intrigues of the King's Aunts, and of the Queen, about giving a Mentor to Lewis XVI.—Influence of the Memoirs of the late Dauphin in this Circumstance.—Portrait of the three Candidates.—The Queen frustrated—The Aunts of the King have the Advantage of her.—How M. de Maurepas gets the better of Cardinal Bernis and M. de Machault.—Portrait of M. de Maurepas—He studies the Character of the King—This Prince attaches himself to M. de Maurepas—The Minister confirms the King in his Aversion to the Duke of Choiseul—Resentment of the Queen—Maurepas pays Regard to the Wishes of the Capital in his Measures—He falls into an Error in the Recall of the Parliaments—He manifests his Disapprobation of the Measures of the late King, Lewis XV.

THE recall of M. de Maurepas to the ministry, considered under the point of view of the establishment of an opposition to the head of the government, is the first and most important epoch in the reign of Lewis XVI.

This prince no longer continued to govern according to established principles. A minister exiled, discontented, and vindictive, became the mentor of the king. It was already a revolution at court.

M. de Maurepas went further: he humbled, he annihilated, a submissive parliament, to establish a parliament, subject to insurrections against the absolute authority of the prince.

He afterwards brought into action, in the person of Turgot and de Malesherbes, the philosophy, which the ancient court had persecuted, exiled, and imprisoned; and he established in the bosom of the state that memorable and destructive contest, which broke forth between virtue, called into employments, and the vices which had formerly occupied them.

He introduced into the government Mr. Necker, who meditated a plan subversive of the military monarchy of the house of Bourbon, with the view of subjecting the executive authority to constitutional forms and regulations.

At last, he dethroned George III. in America, thus detaching one of the jewels from the crown of England. Such are the great operations of M. de Maurepas. Let us carefully contemplate this man, who must attract the attention of posterity, since he has so greatly influenced its fate.

Lewis XVI., alarmed at the disease, and its frightful symptoms, which had cut off his grandfather, was, on his accession to the throne, desirous of being inoculated. The young queen, who had inspired him with the resolu-

tion, thought of profiting by this expedient in procuring the dismission of the ministers that were obnoxious to her, in recalling the duke of Choiseul, and in keeping at a distance from court the princesses of the blood, daughters of Lewis XV., who had attended their father with so much zeal and assiduity, and had interests and views opposite to the re-establishment of the duke of Choiseul in the administration. During his malady, Lewis XVI. kept from his person the people of quality, and the ministers, who had frequented the late king's chamber in the continuance of his illness; but he was not inclined to separate himself from his family. Thus the aunts of the young king had time, before they were seized with the small-pox, the infection of which they had caught from their father, to enter into competition with the queen, for obtaining of her husband the ministers they desired, to maintain a rivalship with Maria Antoinetta in this respect, and to provoke her resentment.

The queen requested with great earnestness, and from a consideration of the interests of her house, the recall of the duke of Choiseul, promoter of the Austrian alliance of 1758, and of her marriage in France. The princesses, on the contrary, regarded the duke as the enemy of France, the minister of the court of Vienna,

and the poisoner of their father. They were at court at the head of the party of the Richelieus and Vauguyon, who loudly proclaimed the accusation. It is evident how much the queen and princesses must have hated each other. The aunts availed themselves, against Maria Antoinetta, of all the influence over the king's mind which could be derived from the memory and the principles of the late dauphin, his father, in prejudice to the politics and immorality of the duke of Choiseul. They exerted all their power to move his filial piety, citing the recommendations of their brother, and representing to him, that France was delivered from a minister, whose audaciousness and prodigality had rendered him, for a while, as powerful as the late king himself. They suggested to their nephew, that, in recalling from exile the duke of Choiseul, for the purpose of placing him again in administration, his connexions with the queen, and his ambition, might yet become more dangerous. They spoke of cardinal Bernis, formerly minister of foreign affairs; of M. de Machault, late keeper of the seals; and of M. de Maurepas, heretofore minister of the marine.—It is from marshal Richelieu that these secret anecdotes have been obtained.

These three ministers were endeared to the

late dauphin of France, and to the children of Lewis XV., particularly after their exile, by the intrigues of madame de Pompadour, so much detested by the royal family. They were also endeared to the nation, the esteem of which they had preserved through the period of their exile, and they were all regarded as men of abilities and integrity. Upon these considerations, the young Lewis XVI. resolved to comply with the desire of his father, manifested in his memoirs, and that of his aunts and of the public, who retained for these three ministers all their former regard. With respect to the duke of Choiseul, he was put aside, entirely on account of the queen's attachment to him, and the character given of him by the late dauphin in his memoirs. In these circumstances, marshal Richelieu and the duke of Aiguillon never quitted madame Adélaide, till they had obtained of the king the object of their wishes.

Madame Adélaide, assured of the exclusion of the duke of Choiseul, thought only of which of the three in question she should choose for prime minister. They read in the family, but in the absence of the queen, the memoirs of the late dauphin: he recommended to his successor the three exiles above mentioned, and they were

still living at the epoch of a new reign. They resolved on secreting, from the queen's sight, all papers of this nature. They obtained from the king his consent to have in his small apartments some cabinets inaccessible to the curiosity of his consort. They observed, that cardinal Bernis had very imprudently paved the way to the alliance with the house of Austria, and by that means had alienated the secondary powers, whose defensive interests, and those of France, were reciprocally connected; but that, born an honest man and a good Frenchman, he had no sooner been prevailed on to sign the treaty, through the influence of madame de Pompadour, who was in the pay of the court of Vienna, than he repented of the transaction, and did penance for it during the exile, to which he was condemned at the moment, when his deep compunction merited a recompence. Bernis was in consequence cited by madame Adélaide as attached to the house of Bourbon by honour and principle: he was represented as a man of abilities, proper to be taken into the administration, and penitent for having signed an alliance repugnant to the principles of the family. Madame Adélaide, at the same time observed, that, from the first treaty of 1756, with Austria, the cardinal might have a pre-

text to form a party with the queen. This consideration led her to observe further, that the interests of the state required, that the king should have no communication with his consort on subjects of politics, and to examine, whether it would not be better to choose for minister either Maurepas or Machault. In consequence of these remarks, Bernis was put out of the question; and Aiguillon, who conducted the intrigue, entertained sanguine hopes, that the new minister would be his uncle Maurepas.

M. de Machault, being thought the most impartial with respect to foreign politics, Lewis XVI. finally determined in his favour; to which resolution he was the more inclined, as Machault had the character also of being a man of the strictest probity. In this situation of affairs, the king wrote a letter of invitation to this ancient keeper of the seals, in which he betrays the timid and embarrassed character of his mind, mixed with a little falsehood. He says, that he partakes with all France in the regret which it justly feels at the death of Lewis XV.; while, in reality, all France received the news of that event with great joy. He acknowledges, that he has great duties to fulfil, that he stands in need of skill for conducting the affairs of government, and he invokes the probity and abilities of M. de Machault.

The abbé Radonvilliers, closely attending the young king in these circumstances, to put in a well-timed word conformably to his views, alarmed at the return of the severe and inflexible Machault, the enemy of the priesthood, observed to madame Adélaide, that the manners of that old minister were extremely severe and jansenistical, and that he would be wholly out of his element at court; the character of which had greatly changed during the latter years of Lewis XV. He added, that some violent and terrible events might be expected, if he should be recalled, after he had so long rusted in his exile; while M. de Maurepas had preserved, during the same situation, all the ease, the graces, and the spirit of the French nation. He observed, that the letter of invitation, by which the king recalled M. de Machault, would apply equally to M. de Maurepas, and proposed that the king should be requested to change merely the cover of it.

The ex-jesuit Radonvilliers had a secret object in view, which he thought proper to conceal. The jesuits and sulpicians could not bear M. de Machault after the edict of 1748, by which he had prohibited the donation of certain class of estates to the French clergy. Radonvilliers was, on the contrary, the friend of Aiguillon, devoted to the jesuits, and detested by the

parliaments. The young king giving way to his observations, agreed, that the same letter, signed in favour of M. de Machault, should be addressed to M. de Maurepas. Radonvilliers and Aiguillon, without knowing it, paved the way to the ruin of the state. M. de Maurepas' talents, in affairs connected with the safety of a great empire, were extremely inadequate to his place. M. de Machault, on the contrary, was a man of profound understanding, capable of maintaining its preservation, in the same way as the empires of Russia, Turkey, England, Austria, &c. Machault possessed an extraordinary degree of foresight, while Maurepas seemed interested only to preserve the state during his own life-time. The abbé Radonvilliers, observing that the duke of Aiguillon was the last and only partizan remaining to the jesuits in the cabinet of Versailles, imagined that M. de Maurepas, uncle to the duke, would maintain him in it. In this situation, party spirit favoured the meanest of the three candidates; and M. de Maurepas, who had neither genius, positive character, nor views sufficiently elevated for a prime minister, was preferred.

M. de Maurepas had been thought capable of managing formerly a distinct department of government, for instance the marine; yet he had

never performed any thing great, new, or enterprising during his ministry, under which the English completed the destruction of our navy; but arrived, in 1774, at an advanced age, he was wholly incapable of conducting the affairs of a great nation, on account of the weakness of his character, and his constantly indulging himself in trifling sallies of the imagination, which he even intermixed with the most serious affairs of state. M. de Machault might startle and intimidate our poor courtiers by his rigid and severe probity: M. de Maurepas, on the contrary, having the manners of the court and the age, it was natural he should have the preference. He enjoyed, at the death of Lewis XV., the reputation common to a minister, that has been disgraced by a king whose memory is no longer regarded with affection by the public. He had been appointed secretary of state, under the regent, at the age of sixteen years; and from that time nature had endowed him with a talent for pleasantry. He loved the sciences, the arts, and literature, to which, if not a great benefactor, he had at least applied himself with taste and success. He had the address to present to two kings, to the indolence of the grandfather, and to the inexperience of young Lewis XVI., an easy and agreeable work, seasoned with anecdotes and pleasing sallies, which

kept him minister for twenty-five years under the old king, and under the last to his death. On arriving at court, Maurepas had begun with studying the character of his master. He found him of a timid, reserved, and close disposition, such as was necessary for governing in his room, and he availed himself of it. He had no sooner entered upon office, than he discovered his hatred towards the late king, who had exiled him. He endeavoured to instil into the mind of Lewis XVI. the most unfavourable ideas of all that passed in the destruction of the parliaments, and thus mollified the disposition of the young king, which had been averse to these ancient courts of supreme jurisdiction. He assured Lewis XVI., that his grandfather had entertained the design of re-establishing a portion of the parliament. At first he had to struggle for some time with the chancellor Maupeou, who penetrated his intentions; but as he wished to govern without any obstacle, and to remain in possession of the royal authority without a competitor, the ruin of Maupeou was resolved upon. He had at his disposal a confidential magistrate to substitute in his room, Hue de Miromenil, the predominant quality in whose character was that of being in a perpetual tremor.

Lewis XVI. relished much the first conver-

sations of the count de Maurepas, who endeavoured to ingratiate himself, by telling him sentimental anecdotes of the dauphin, his father, for whom Lewis XVI. entertained the highest veneration. Maurepas confirmed the king in the belief, that the duke of Choiseul had hastened the death of the late dauphin, and never ceased to support him in the resolution of keeping the duke for ever from the court, and especially from holding any place in the administration. In his manuscript memoirs, and private conversations, he represented him as a waster of the revenues of the state, who, in order to form to himself an invincible party in France, had lavished more than twelve millions in pensions, given away without discretion to people who had no other merit than that of being protected by the Choiseul family.

Maurepas one day caused a list to be drawn up of the favours bestowed on individuals bearing the name of Choiseul, and made it plainly appear, that no other family in France had cost the fourth part of that which had been occupied by the relations of this minister. Thus, in proportion as the queen importuned Lewis XVI. about recalling Choiseul to the court, M. de Maurepas, labouring in an opposite direction, rendered him hateful to the prince. His own aversion to the duke of Choiseul had been the

cause of bringing him into place, and the same aversion maintained him in the enjoyment of it. Hence arose the first animosity of Maria Antoinetta towards M. de Maurepas; and she was determined to do every thing in her power for recalling to the ministry the friend of her house and the author of her marriage.

The conduct of the other ministers was consistent with that of Maurepas. He employed, with address, the abbé Terray to blacken the character of the duke of Choiseul, before he should himself precipitate him from the administration of the finances. After the abbé Terray, Turgot, who had the same opinion of the duke, continued to asperse him in his audiences and conversations with the king. The chancellor Maupeou, obnoxious to the duke on account of a former transaction, united himself to this party. They went so far as to say, that Maria Antoinetta was a daughter of the duke of Choiseul, and they calculated the months and days of the pregnancy of Maria Theresa. They cited the epoch of the embassy of the duke to Vienna, to give a specious appearance to this opinion, which, however, the dates flatly contradicted. Vergennes, both from resentment and principle, was an enemy to all political connexions with Austria. Lavrillière, who had executed the orders of the

king in banishing him to Chanteloup, after having intrigued with Aiguillon and madame Dubarry, exerted himself in the affair as much as was possible for a person who had lost his credit and consideration. In the royal family the king's three aunts were unanimous in aiming at the same end. Thus, to whatever side the king turned himself, he found no person who was not an implacable enemy to the name of Choiseul, except the queen, whose mind was full of vexation at seeing this multiplicity of oppositions to the favourite object of her heart.

M. de Maurepas had gained the confidence of the king, by making it a rule never openly to contradict him. He artfully gave him the satisfaction of deciding for himself with regard to the most important affairs of state, by preparing, in a distant manner, and indirectly, the determination, which he left him to see half displayed. He had learnt this useful piece of address from the ministers under the late king. When he wished to obtain a signature contrary to the inclination of the king, he never proposed it directly. He said something of the English, of Spain, or of the emperor; he announced some particular success or disaster, according to the nature of the affair which he meant to transact, and the king subscribed measures contrary to his own judgment. Lewis XVI. car-

ried his confidence and good-nature to his minister so far, that when any measure failed of being attended with the expected success, he never reproached him for it.

The king granted M. de Maurepas a small apartment near his own, for the convenience of consulting him on all occasions. The minister gained his confidence so much, that the king would frequently sit in this apartment and work with him. M. de Maurepas was truly first minister; he enjoyed all the power attending the office, without desiring its invidious distinction.

It was perceived, that he wished to finish his career without commotion or noise. An artist having presented madame de Maurepas with different designs of a medal, which the family wished to have struck in honour of him, the abbé de Veri, madame de Maurepas, and the intimate friends of his house, removed every thing that seemed like adulation or the oriental style, either in the inscriptions or figures. One design only of Gatteaux's was approved: it represented the god of silence, who shut the mouth of a panegyrist. This idea particularly pleased madame de Maurepas. She said, that it characterised the modesty of her husband, who ardently desired that he might not be spoken of.

M. de Maurepas was easy of access at court:

he spoke facetiously to every person that had any intimacy with him. With others, his conversation was guarded, but civil and polite. Habituated to retirement and simplicity during his long exile, he neither changed his style of living nor manners at court. He contented himself with a very moderate salary, to concur with the king, naturally economical, in the plans for the re-establishment of the finances, which he had much at heart. When he thoroughly discovered the character of the king, and had completely gained his confidence, he endeavoured constantly to prevent the weakness of that prince from being known; and this was one of the greatest advantages that he procured to the state. He represented the king as a good and just prince, a lover of order, and the friend of the people. He thought that for the character of a king, weak and destitute of resolution, to be known, was the greatest misfortune that could happen to the French. He had both sagacity and prudence, and could see, from a great distance, the issue of an affair. He would have calculated the effects of the recall of the parliaments, had not his vindictive disposition, and his prejudice against the measures of the late king, led him astray: he likewise did not perceive in that affair of state, the precipice to which a measure so delicate and dangerous tended. The party

that opposed the parliaments, however, did not fail to suggest to him such pointed observations respecting the impending dangers, that one would now be inclined almost to say they could only be made when the time was over; those in particular of madame Adélaide and of Monsieur. But M. de Maurepas wished to end his career in tranquillity, and to yield to the clamours which resounded from every quarter for the recall of the magistrates. He wished to rescue himself from Maupeou, a man resolute and endowed with genius, who might subvert him, and confer great consequence on another ministry. He wished to indulge his revenge in destroying the principal measure of the reign of the late king, and these motives overturned the magistracy of M. de Maupeou.

The deference of M. de Maurepas for the fluctuating opinions of the capital, was a very great defect in a minister. The government, before the reign of Lewis XVI., obliged the capital to conform itself to the tastes, the fashions, principles, and opinions of the court: it was enough that any member of the administration, protected by the reigning minister, should be attacked in a pamphlet, a Christmas carol, or by any tumultuous clamour, to make the person calumniated be raised to some considerable post. Under Maurepas, who wished

to give general satisfaction, avoid disturbances, and reconcile contending parties, the court paid attention to the dispositions of the people of the capital, and the transient rage of their desires. This revolution, in the correspondence of the ministry with the societies in the chief city of the empire, was the first cause of the weakness and ruin of the government. There were societies in Paris under the influence of inquisitive and philosophical innovators, who incessantly inveighed against the authority and spirit of the ancient government. M. de Maurepas let his timidity be known, and, instead of ruling the opinion of the capital, after the example of former ministers, who either obliged the capital to give its approbation to the measures of state, or were contented without it, the opinion of the capital over-ruled him. It was then not the court of Versailles that governed the existing generation, but the existing generation that governed the court; an infallible symptom that a revolution impended.

CHAP. XII.

Commencement of the ministerial Career of M. de Vergennes, educated in the Diplomatic Department by his Relation Chavigny—The King, of his own Accord, calls him into the Administration—Reason for opposing him to the Duke of Choiseul—His Principles—His Hatred to the House of Austria—Timidity of his Character—Devotion to ancient Diplomatics—Solution of many political Problems relative to his Administration—The secret, but timid Enemy of the Queen—Vain Efforts of this Princess against him—He ridicules her—He enjoys the Confidence of the King—He fortifies himself in the anti-Austrian Principles of the Dauphin—He respects the Alliance of 1756, but constantly represses, in Secret, the Ambition of Austria—His Character induces him to temporise.

M. De Vergennes, brought up by Chavigny, his relation, embassador from France to Portugal, was at first French envoy at the court of Treves in 1750, and envoy at Hanover to the king of England, in 1752. He returned to Treves in 1754, and in 1755 was appointed minister plenipotentiary to Constantinople, where he assumed the character of embassador till his recall in 1769, under the administration of the duke of Choiseul. He withdrew the following year to his estate in Burgundy, in a sort of

disgrace; but being recalled by the duke of Aiguillon, he was sent into Sweden, to conduct a revolution in favour of king Gustavus and the French party, degraded by the Russian faction; and immediately on the accession of Lewis XVI. to the crown he was called into administration.

M. de Vergennes had been the disciple of M. de Chavigny, famous in the diplomatic art: he had imbibed the principles of the ancient policy of France in its primitive purity, before it was adulterated by the Austrian systems of the abbé Bernis and the duke of Choiseul. The French diplomatic body, selected by cardinal Fleury or by d'Argenson, was not yet infected with the doctrine, which degraded it from the moment prince Kaunitz obtained the ascendancy over madame de Pompadour.

In our diplomatic body at that time, was M. de Saint Aignan, who destined in the sacred college the celebrated Lambertini to the popedom. There was in it likewise the nephew of Fenelon, our embassador in Holland, illustrious for his virtue, talents, and profound learning. In Russia, la Chetardie, who brought the princess Elizabeth from nothing, to make her empress. In Sweden, Saint Séverin, who laid the train for producing the revolution of 1772. It was with such colleagues that Vergennes found him-

self in correspondence in the corps of diplomatic ministers,

It was the king himself, without any influence on the part of M. de Maurepas, who called him into administration, madame Adélaide contributing towards it. The memoirs of the late dauphin, having besides pointed him out as a pacific politician, prudent at the same time, and brought up in a knowledge of the interests of the house of Bourbon, the king, firm in his resolution of opposing a person of this description to the parties and intrigues, which the queen, Maria Theresa, her mother, and the emperor, endeavoured to establish in France, dispatched himself two couriers before the arrival of M. de Maurepas; one to M. Dumuy, who was at that time upon his duty as a commander, and the other to M. de Vergennes, embassador at Stockholm. The duke of Choiseul had filled all Europe with his fame and enterprising spirit. The king, who dreaded his bold and restless disposition, wished to oppose to him a minister who would follow a different course, and was likewise of a different character; in a word, a minister whom Choiseul had disgraced, and had endeavoured to render contemptible, when he recalled him from Constantinople, after his marriage with

mademoiselle Anne Duvivier, and when he obliged him to retire into Burgundy *.

To know thoroughly Lewis XVI., history ought always to keep in view the secret firmness of this prince for maintaining the political interests of his house with respect to the emperor. What is likewise very remarkable in him, is, that his firmness in this point was combined with great weakness in other affairs of state. M. de Vergennes therefore found himself at ease with the king, as well as M. de Maurepas; and they both availed themselves so much of the disposition of Lewis XVI., that they never ceased to keep awake the distrust, with which he had been inspired by the dauphin, his father. To this was owing the perpetual impotency of the queen, and of the intrigues of the Choiseul party, against M. de Vergennes and M. de Maurepas, whom she so often attempted in vain to turn out of office.

Hence arose the secret struggle of the court between the party of the late dauphin and that of the queen; or, what is the same, between

* The duke of Choiseul spread a report, that mademoiselle Duvivier was a slave, and had had children by her master. He published this anecdote in the libels, which his party hawked about against their enemies in the diplomatic department, and against the party of the jesuits.

the party of Choiseul and the ancient French diplomatic body, reduced merely to defensive efforts, because the king was unwilling to come to any rupture with the court of Vienna, or to endanger a re-union of Austria and England, as in 1740, to attach himself to Frederic, whose selfish and immoral politics could not be depended upon, after the instance of his defection in 1741.

Hence, the earnest endeavours of M. de Vergennes, for keeping the queen from the knowledge of the papers and details of the secret politics of the late dauphin of France, the last branch of the Bourbons, who had maintained the ancient diplomatic principles of the nation in their purity. Lewis XVI. was so careful to preserve secresy on this point, that the queen never came to the knowledge of the place in which the papers and memoirs were deposited, which M. de Vergennes had been industrious to collect, for the purpose of maintaining the king in the principles which he inherited from his father.

Hence, the perpetual solicitude of the queen, and the criminal expedients, to which recourse was often had, through her permission, for learning of her husband political facts, the knowledge of which she believed to be of great importance to the interests of her house. It is

well remembered, that the party of Vergennes perpetually affirmed, that she gave that prince intoxicating draughts, to draw from him secrets, which she afterwards communicated to the count of Mercy, her mother's embassador; while the Orleans faction affirmed, on the other hand, that she made use of the same means for draining the royal treasury and enriching her brother.

Hence, the construction of the private staircase, which the king ordered to be made in his apartments, that he may hold more secretly a correspondence with madame Adélaide, procure her advice on urgent occasions, and, above all, derive consolation from her company, which she never ceased to afford even in the alarming circumstances of 1789.

Hence, the secret and provident memoirs which M. de Vergennes gave directly to the king, after arranging and copying them with his own hand, in which, the day before the arrival of the archduke, or of Joseph II. at Versailles, the minister informed him so clearly of every thing which these personages would propose next day against the interests of France, that Lewis XVI. was prepared to give an answer on every point that occurred.

Hence, the secret correspondence, active and

passive, not known to this day, except by a few, between the king and the minister, in which M. de Vergennes kept the king perpetually upon the watch over the person and views of the queen; a correspondence preserved with equal care, by the king in his private apartments, under the stand of the anvils, and by the minister in a secret drawer, the key of which he sent to the king some days before his death; a correspondence in which is shown the propriety of preserving an alliance with the house of Austria, and, at the same time, the absolute necessity of circumscribing the emperor in such a manner, as that he should never depart from the terms of our treaty, to bind up the hands of France, and degrade her in the eyes of Europe, by depriving her of her liberty.

Hence, that unreserved freedom of sentiment which M. de Vergennes maintained in his intercourse with the king, which was carried so far, that the king and the minister no longer disguised the immoderate attachment of the queen to her family, and the king dispatched messengers to M. de Vergennes, prescribing to him silence relative to particular points, of which the prince wished the queen to remain ignorant, especially the affair of Bavaria.

Hence, the inviolable connexion between Maurepas and de Vergennes, which was rendered

still more close by the queen's hatred. Maurepas, exiled by madame de Pompadour, who had conceived the plan of forming a ministry of her creatures, by means of whom she might subject France to the politics of Austria; and Vergennes, recalled from his embassy by order of the duke of Choiseul, the declared enemy of all policy which tended to preserve the ancient attachments of the French, had to maintain a perpetual struggle with the dark intrigues of the party who were exerting every effort to turn them out of administration.

Hence, M. de Vergennes' jokes on the intrigues of the queen, who laboured without intermission to procure his disgrace. The count was so well assured of the king's attachment, that he took every opportunity of showing in his conversation how little he regarded all the queen's efforts against him.

Hence, the witticism told of M. de Vergennes, when, at the death of M. de Maurepas, the queen, redoubling her intrigues for depriving him of the king's confidence, this minister was heard to say: "One would suppose it was not known, that I have made a vow to die in office." In fact, the intrigues of different foreign powers had for ages precipitated the ministers from their station, without waiting for their natural death.

Hence, the prudent conduct and great attention of M. de Vergennes, to preserve the friendship of Maurepas, in order to maintain himself in office by the credit of his intimate connexion with him; defend himself against the secret machinations of the queen; labour in concert with him, to secure the king's favour; maintain in this prince a perpetual jealousy of the ambition of the house of Austria; and, according to the opinion of a very acute and sagacious courtier, to whom I owe the observation, direct against Maurepas alone all the intrigues of Maria Antoinetta. M. de Vergennes affected to act as a subaltern minister, with the principal minister, without thinking himself degraded by it, and with so little jealousy, that M. de Maurepas frequently reported to the king the transactions, relative to foreign affairs, as if managed by himself. It was in such circumstances that the talents of M. de Vergennes, and the insignificance of M. de Maurepas, in matters of politics, gave occasion to the count Aranda to write from Madrid, that he prattled with M. de Maurepas, and negotiated with M. de Vergennes.

Hence, the animosity, continually increasing, of the two parties, those of the queen and of M. de Vergennes; an animosity which was carried so far, that the partisans of the latter

gave out, that Maurépas had been poisoned at the diabolical instigation of the queen.

Hence, also, the animosity of the parties of Loménie and of the queen, who continued to traduce his character even after his death, accusing him of having accumulated millions at the expence of the state.

Hence, that opposite re-action of the party of M. de Vergennes, who charged the queen with the same fault, and united themselves with the Orleans' party to persuade the nation, that the queen, to the very soul, was always invariably Austrian, that she squandered the revenues of the state, and enriched with our treasure the emperor her brother.

What is extremely remarkable in the two hostile factions of the court, is, that the king, who was thoroughly acquainted with the contests and the reciprocal accusations of the parties, never once intermitted his attachment either to the queen or his minister; but reposed in the latter his confidence, and adopted such measures with regard to the former, as might preserve his cabinet vigilant against the enterprises of the court of Vienna.

The truth of this remark will clearly appear from the affair of the opening of the Scheldt, in which Lewis XVI. supported his character against the ambition of Joseph II., obliging him

to be satisfied with a sum of money, and to renounce his pretensions.

It appears also in the affair of Bavaria, when the house of Austria was obliged to abandon her favourite system of aggrandisement, and of annexing to her dominions a country which for many ages had been an object of her ambition, on seeing that France on one side, and Prussia on the other, were determined to exert all their power in forcing her to relinquish such a project.

It may again be traced in the stop which was put to the farther division of Poland, with regard to which Austria sounded our cabinet, but received no encouragement to proceed in the design; a design which she thought it necessary not to resume, unless at a period when engaged in a war with France.

And, lastly, it is verified in the affairs of Turkey, whose cause was espoused by France with so much effect under M. de Vergennes, that the house of Austria and Russia abandoned the confederacy which they had projected against the Ottoman Porte.

M. de Vergennes, therefore, though naturally pusillanimous and irresolute, displayed in the cabinet of Versailles all the energy of a great character, since he compelled Austria, in spite

of the influence of the queen of France, and the natural obstinacy of Joseph II., to keep herself within the bounds of moderation: he even brought to punishment in France the partisans of the inflammatory political speculations in favour of Austria. This was not Linguet, the turbulent critic, who, in our time, was committed to the Bastille, but Linguet the secret agent of Austria, that defended her pretensions relative to the Scheldt, and her diplomatical projects.

REIGN OF LEWIS XVI.

SECOND EPOCH:

OR

The Re-establishment of the Parliaments.

" The youths of the parliaments, becoming tired all at once of living in obscurity in the midst of law-suits and private quarrels, resolved to seek for noise and renown. They accordingly marched from different points, with one general taste for innovation. The parliament demanded the convocation of the states-general, from the month of August 1787; and while, by a formal resolution, it accused the ministry of reducing the French government to a state of despotism, of disposing of persons by *lettres-de-cachet*, of property by violation of justice, of affairs civil and criminal by removing causes from one court of law to another, or by repeals, and of suspending the course of justice by banishment or arbitrary removals;—it evinced its regret, at having been actuated, for so long a time, by other principles."

NECKER *on the French Revolution*, *vol.* 1.

CHAP. XIII.

Intrigues of the Court of Lewis XVI. for the Re-establishment of the Parliaments abolished under the preceding Reign—The Court is divided into two Parties on this Subject—Interests of the Party of the Queen, who wished for the Return of the exiled and ruined Parliaments—Interests of the Party of Monsieur, who desired the Preservation of the established Parliaments—Character of the third Party—The Princes of the Blood divided in Opinion—The Ministry itself divided—M. de Vergennes and M. de Muy oppose the Return of the Parliaments, in concert with the Remains of the Ministry of Lewis XV.—M. de Maurepas paves the Way for their Return, and procures the Exile of Terray and Maupeou.—Day called 'the St. Bartholomew of the Ministers.'—The King a silent Spectator during the Debates, which tore to Pieces the Royal Authority, and analysed it before the Eyes of the People.

LEWIS XV., after having sent the duke of Choiseul into exile, threw himself into the arms of the enemies of that minister. This prince, while his weakness was anticipated, derived strength to his character from the hatred and violence which the opposite party manifested against the duke. The chancellor Maupeou, marshal Richelieu, the duke of Aiguillon,

and madame Dubarry, surrounded him almost exclusively. The parliament, losing with the duke of Choiseul, the only support it had at court, and no person having access to the king, whether in his hours of pleasure or business, but the enemies of the magistracy, this body, detested at the court of Versailles, yielded of necessity to the irresistible power of government, which was enraged against them. The king, however, in a short time, perceived that his power was circumscribed, when not supported by the approbation of the people. The old parliament had, doubtless, in their decisions, been guilty of various acts of injustice; but, when stripped and exiled, they attracted the sympathy not only of France, but the other nations of Europe. Every heart that was sensible to misfortune and the rigours of persecution, every man of character and reflexion who entertained sentiments repugnant to absolute power in government, manifested solicitude and discontent on this interesting occasion. They forgot the vices and faults of a political body, to speak of the families which had rendered it illustrious, for ages, by their talents and virtue; and while they detailed, on the other hand, the want of delicacy and knowledge of many members of the new parliament, they passed over in silence the enlightened minds and the probity of the rest

of its members. They called the former parliament, "the parliament and court of peers of France." The new assembly was named, in derision, "Maupeou's parliament."

Lewis XV., in abolishing the parliaments, had shown great firmness and injustice; but when he saw the princes of the blood, the peers of the kingdom, and, above all, a violent opposition united against his exercise of power, in respect of those assemblies, his anger and resentment were mitigated. The friends of the old parliaments spread a report, that the king had very little regard for his new creation; they affirmed, that he thought of dissolving it; and his successor had scarcely ascended the throne, when, acting upon this supposition, they prepared for their re-establishment. The following is a list of the personages who composed the two parties.

Party of the Parliaments abolished & exiled by Lewis XV., in 1771.

The Queen.
Count of Artois.
Duke of Orleans.
Duke of Chartres. *(Egalité).*
Prince of Conty.
Majority of the peers of the kingdom.
Duke of Choiseul and his faction.
Count Maurepas.
Jansenist minority of the clergy, and its party.
Philosophical bishops.
A portion of the republic of letters.
Majority of the clergy.
The jesuits, their party, and M. de Beaumont, archbishop of Paris, their chief.
Devotees of the court, having at their head madame de Marsan.

Party of the Parliaments established by M. de Maupeou, in 1771.

Monsieur.
The three aunts of Lewis XVI.
The Carmelite nun at St. Denis.
Duke of Penthièvre.
Chancellor of France.
Minority of the peers of the kingdom, especially the duke of Aiguillon and marshal Richelieu.
Remains of the old ministry of Lewis XV., particularly abbé Terray, duke of Lavrillière, Bertin, Deboynes, prince of Soubise, counts Muy and Vergennes, appointed ministers by Lewis XVI.

Third intermediate Party, which had fluctuated and passed from one Party to another, in 1774.

Prince of Condé.
Count de la Marche, son of the prince of Conty.
Several peers of France.

In this manner was France divided in 1774: such was the state of the factions and the hostile classification of their individuals, who lived on such good terms, striving who should contribute most to the tranquillity of the state, before the late troubles of the parliament.

The third party, that of the prince of Condé, versatile and undecided in his principles, could never maintain itself in France. The nation beheld it, thus fluctuating, without concern, because a direct and ingenuous decision to one opinion or the other was requisite; *the coalition system*, which could alone preserve the nation, which alone had re-established the public tranquillity after the bloody scenes of the league, and which alone had, in one instance, given peace to England, after the two revolutions against the house of Stuart, being unknown to the country. The opinion of M. d'Aiguillon, who wished to form one parliament of the two, was treated with sarcasms and ridicule. The two parties, without making any abatement of their respective demands, were desirous, one of the re-establishment, and the other of the perpetual exile, of the old magistracy.

When we closely examine the contests with which France was agitated by these two fac-

tions, we discover the nature of the dispute. It was the party of infant liberty struggling with that of despotism; the party for religion, with that of philosophy; the party for military despotism, with that of a limited monarchy.

It is not given to every state, or to every people, to form a just estimate of the advantages of political coalitions. A nation engaged in disputes, which bring it to the verge, or perhaps involve it in all the tumult of revolution, is incapable of devising or employing temperate resources for its internal security. It must experience for a considerable time the calamities of anarchy, before it becomes capable of profiting by salutary expedients; the two hostile parties must be worn out and destroyed, before the mass of the nation can make its voice be heard in the contest, before it can testify its abhorrence alike of both the factions, which, to gratify their own ambition and violence, have daringly imbrued their hands in the vitals of their country.

In Switzerland, the result of the war for the protection of freedom against the house of Austria, was the singular union of every sort of government, aristocratical, democratical, mixed, military, catholic, and protestant, suited to

the use, choice, taste, of all kinds of people. The consequence was internal tranquillity, uninterrupted, till the states were deprived of it by the directory.

America, after a war for the preservation of liberty and independence, has been obliged, for the purpose of securing its safety, to form a constitution partaking at the same time of monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical principles. In England, when the three contending parties had killed, plundered, sacked, and governed in their turns like tyrants, the belligerent factions being at length exhausted, the voice of the nation was heard, and it restored universal tranquillity. It is to this immortal event that Great-Britain owes her prosperity and glory, as well as that opposition which she maintains to the great continental nation. Henry IV., become the sovereign of all parties, had the singular address, after much fluctuation and political artifice, to grant a general indemnity, and call indiscriminately to his councils the leaguers and the royalists, the Roman-catholics and the protestants. It was thus that he established the house of Bourbon, which would still have reigned, if Lewis XVI. had been acquainted with the doctrine of coalitions; if he had called to his councils Choiseul and Aiguil-

lon; if he had maintained the authority of a master with these two factious aristocrates, and had commanded them, under pain of his royal displeasure, to bury in perpetual oblivion their hatred and ambition, and subject to his authority the whole of their disputes. But in reality, as long as a revolution continues to be armed, the two opposite parties are irreconcileable, because the intermediate or neutral party in the mass of the people is passive, and, though ardent in its desires, has not the courage to declare itself. It is obliged to leave, as in 1774, the royalists and patriots to devour and destroy one another. The favourable result of time and circumstances alone, the decrease of their population, strength, riches, which they exhaust in their sanguinary contentions, by gradually weakening them, deprives them of the revolutionary power, of all interest in government, and at last subjects them to the will of the moderate part of the nation. Then arrives the epoch of great transactions in society. Then commences the repose of the people, and the silence of factions.

But Lewis XVI. could not easily, on his accession to the crown, command the coalition of the two parties. Indeed, this expedient was unknown; the opinions of the nation which

he had to govern being all absorbed in one or other of the two parties. Behold the poverty and nakedness of the mixed party of the prince of Condé and count de la Marche! The wisdom possessed by that minority was despised and treated with scorn by the two opposite parties. The energy of the belligerent parties, more predominant than the military power of a heedless and inactive monarch, who permitted M. de Maurepas to indulge his partialities in that contest, stifled every idea of wisdom and reconciliation; and Lewis XVI. and M. de Maurepas, unable even to subdue the party of the exiled parliaments, which was the party of persecuted liberty that threatened retaliation, were far less able to subdue the two parties at once.

With regard to the relative force of the two factions in a state of hostility, they were so nearly balanced, both in influence and power, that there was reason to dread a long and intestine contest. Lewis XVI. besides manifested no opinion, till the decisive moment had arrived.

In respect of the individuals of each of the two parties, all those who desired the return of the parliament had by no means the same end in view; and those who were for its continuing in exile, were silent from different mo-

tives. It is necessary to develope this chaos, since the court had the address to dissolve the two great factions by subdividing them, as was the duty of a government in such embarrassing circumstances; for the difference in their secret views portended extraordinary occurrences to France.

Lewis XVI. had hardly mounted the throne, when the duke of Orleans and the duke of Chartres, manifested in the most public manner their sentiments relative to the parliaments which were suppressed. They presented to Lewis XVI., memorials, which that prince communicated to the chancellor Maupeou, for the purpose of answering them. The family of Orleans had always protected the parliament, and always affected likewise to be at the head of opposition. They never forgot that the parliament had annulled the testament of Lewis XIV., and had stripped the legitimated princes of valuable privileges, to bestow them on Philip of Orleans, by adjudging to him the regency and the absolute authority of France. The parliament, on its side, remembered, that the regent had conceded to them the privilege of making remonstrances, a privilege which they had for a long time abused, and continued to abuse, under the reign of Lewis XV. The son of the regent, educated in these principles, had

openly professed the religious opinions of the jansenists and the doctrine of the parliaments; and at this time the duke of Orleans, grandson to the regent, a prince of a decent character, amiable and mild in his manners, persisted in supporting the system of his house, but with the appearance of an opposition wise, reserved, and peaceful; retiring to a distance from the court, that he might not expose himself; coming nearer when it promised him a return of the parliament, and at last removing entirely to his estates, when he found himself deceived, chiefly to Sainte-Assise, the residence of madame de Montesson, his wife, his counsellor, his happiness and support in these difficult circumstances.

His son, the duke of Chartres, so well known since under the names of the duke of Orleans and citizen Egalité, maintained with his father the system of his house, but with that stubbornness of character, and that sourness and acrimony in the means employed, that exasperates, instead of conciliating, the opposite party. Under Lewis XV. he shared his principles and resistance, with every thing that was immoral in the party that opposed the ruin of the parliaments. Under the new king he united with the count d'Artois, endeared to that party by the similarity of his manners, and attached

himself to the queen, who in these affairs betrayed a manifest partiality for the old parliaments. The parliament of Maupeou perceived the tendency of the queen's coalition with the king's brother, already noted for the audaciousness of his character, and with the family of Orleans, who preserved the title and prerogatives of the first princes of the blood, and possessed great influence from their extraordinary riches. Maupeou, who assumed the lead in his party, resolved to do every thing for dividing the forces of this formidable coalition, accused the queen of making frequent visits to the duke of Chartres under the pretext of the affairs of the parliament, but in reality for criminal parties of pleasure. This calumny, thrown out with the view of detaching her from the count d'Artois and the duke of Chartres, had no other effect than to deprive her gradually of that respect and consideration, which the French had hitherto uniformly manifested towards her.

Maria Antoinetta, in protecting the exiled parliament, acted in perfect conformity to the interests of the house of Austria. The old parliament was the chief support of the duke of Choiseul; and Maria Theresa never ceased, in her instructions, to recommend a minister, who had sunk under the weight of the opposition and vengeance which he had incurred as the

author of the treaty of 1758, and as the head of the Austrian party, which she had the address to establish in the ministry and at the court. There was, besides, an ancient partiality in the house of Austria for the abolished parliaments: that house had nothing to fear from France but the military power of a government, that, before the treaty of 1758, prosecuted with great success the system of dismembering the Austrian dominions. The political body opposed to this military power, the body which could refuse to supply money and could traverse the designs of the court, the body naturally repugnant to the military power of the court of Versailles, was, ever since the time of the great cardinal Richelieu, the necessary and natural friend that the house of Austria found in France. Maria Antoinetta, who never forgot at court that she was born an archduchess, as is shown in every part of this work, could therefore not partake with the house of Bourbon in the aversion which the court of Versailles entertained respecting the old parliament; and this was one source of the hatred which the aunts of the king vowed towards her. It is obvious, besides, what affinity there was between the parliament and the principles of jansenism. The head and founder of that party had established his doctrine at Ypres, under the go-

vernment of the house of Austria. Maria Theresa, in recommending the parliaments to her daughter, acted conformably to the maxims of her ancestors, who had never found in France any other secret servants than the parliaments and jansenists. The queen, therefore, made every effort to obtain the re-establishment of the parliaments, as friends of the duke of Choiseul, the declared enemies of the duke of Aiguillon, and the future support of a minister whom she was resolved to establish. Count d'Artois, however, acceded to the party only through levity and folly, because the queen was on that side, and had desired, that he would appear favourable to the old parliaments.

With respect to the prince of Conty, it was from theory, and to preserve the ancient usages of the monarchy, that he refused to unite himself with the new magistracy. He countenanced writers who rummaged old titles and diplomas, to discover any facts or obsolete laws that were favourable to the parliaments. Dissatisfied at court under madame de Pompadour, discontented under madame Dubarry, removed from Versailles during the first explosion against the parliaments, he enjoyed the public esteem in common with all the malcontents. His opposition to the act of M. de Maupeou was brilliant and animated.

The court, under Lewis XV., had succeeded in bending the count de la Marche, son of the prince of Conty, and detaching him from the party of his father and the old parliaments. It was he who bore since the title of prince of Conty, and who is known at present under the name of citizen Conty. His father exclaimed on this occasion, "I well knew that the count de la Marche was a bad son and a bad husband, but I did not know that he was a bad subject." The old prince of Conty said publicly, that whoever was a friend to the measures of M. de Maupeou, was neither a Frenchman, a good subject, nor an honest man. The spirit of faction disunited children from their fathers at that time, as at present; and yet the peers of France, who had for the most part grown old with the late king in pleasures and debauchery, had lost the character and consequence necessary to the preservation of parties. The majority of the peers had protested against the ruin of the parliaments; but many had deposited their protest with trusty notaries, from whom they could withdraw, according to circumstances, the proofs of an insignificant contradiction. The duke of Choiseul alone, active and enterprising even in exile, opposed to the measures of Lewis XV. the discontent of a powerful faction that arose in France to the advantage of the house of

Austria. He had a support in the jansenist bishops, as a friend to the parliaments; he found another in the philosophical bishops, who began to appear under this new reign, and acquired considerable influence, supported at Paris by the encyclopedists, and at court by M. de Maurepas.

The personage last mentioned, when recalled to court, beheld the storm which the party of the old parliament was preparing; and laboured, from the moment of his return to administration, like the selfish man who places all his fortune in annuities only for his own life. It seemed that Maurepas was resolved to conduct the machine of government during his life-time, and to abandon it afterwards to its destiny and dangers. He felt not sufficient courage to continue the ardent struggle with Maupeou. The genius of the chancellor eclipsed him, and rendered him apprehensive of a fall. During his former ministry, he had been a friend to the parliaments, and had never loved the jesuits. From the collection which he had made in his retirement, of writings and engravings which had appeared during his administration, I have found that he protected the jansenists and parliaments. The revolution of Maupeou, which had ruined the latter of these, was contrary to the opinions of the people, whose clamours and mobs were

therefore dreaded by Maurepas. He was often heard to say, jesting, " I do not like to be dragged upon a sledge for the affairs of M. de Maupeou." He hated the late king, who had kept him during thirty years in exile; he loved the late dauphin, who was in opposition to his father and the favourite, who had contributed to his disgrace: he was therefore the natural enemy of the new parliaments. Thus every person in the party of the suppressed parliaments was influenced in the affair of their recall, by personal and different motives; and we shall see in the sequel how these motives disclose themselves.

The party of the new magistracy had other reasons of state to oppose to the antecedent party. The three aunts of Lewis XVI., and especially madame Adélaide, the sprightliest and most enterprising, were tenderly attached to the memory of the late king their father; who had been additionally dear to them, since, at the hazard of their lives, by services the meanest and most disgusting, they had astonished the whole court during his last illness. They beheld with sorrow the plan for the ruin of the last work of the king, and the triumph of a party which ought, in his opinion, to be sacrificed to the safety of the state. They had been brought up, like the late dauphin their brother, in an implacable hatred to the

parliaments, and were chagrined at the behaviour at court of the young Maria Antoinetta, who publicly gave her protection to the parliament abolished by their father. The return of the parliament and of the duke of Choiseul, whom they considered as the murderer of their brother, was likely, in their opinion, to increase the haughtiness of the queen, if that princess should succeed in the design to re-establish them. The king's aunt, a carmelite at St. Cloud, professed the same sentiments; but on account of particular considerations, resulting from the perpetual opposition which the exiled parliament had manifested to the clergy, of whom she was the avowed protector on becoming a carmelite nun at Saint Denis, she declined any active part in their favour. Intimately connected with Beaumont, archbishop of Paris, and with the most devout of the bishops, she said, that religion would be in danger from the day that the parliament should return. "We should be very much surprised if the queen thought like my father or my brother," said madame Adélaide to madame Louisa, on the subject of the parliaments; "we discover in her every day some new opinion contrary to the interests of the French monarchy.

With regard to Monsieur, the king's brother, the queen's taking the part of Choiseul and the

parliaments, was a sufficient inducement for him to take that of Maupeou and the duke of Aiguillon. His natural temper led him constantly to favour the party in opposition to government; and, when the ministers seemed to favour the principles of liberty in projecting the return of the parliament, Monsieur professed the principles of Moreau, and the writers who maintain the doctrine of a military and absolute power.

The prince of Condé, and the count de la Marche, who had protested with the princes and the peers at the beginning of the dispute, ranged themselves ultimately in the party of Lewis XV. Condé, born a courtier, had done so in consequence of his principles respecting the military authority of kings, and the contempt he affected for every degree of opposition to the established authority. The count de la Marche was influenced by the consideration of being removed from a father who had constantly tyrannised over him, and of devoting himself to government, which was become his refuge and support.

With regard to the remainder of the old ministry of Lewis XV., they displayed a friendship for the parliament of M. de Maupeou. They had dispersed the old parliament; they had

organised the new; they could not dissemble a repentance incompatible with the sentiments they entertained. La Vrillière, who had signed so many *lettres-de-cachet* against the members of the parliament, revolted at the thought of signatures of a nature directly contrary. Maupeou and Terray, who had abandoned the interests of the parliamentary body, could not behold without terror the consequences of a re-establishment.

The clergy, who had experienced so many shocks from the old parliament, now enjoying a tranquillity which they owed to the conduct of M. de Maupeou, dreaded with reason a return of the former disputes. Beaumont, often exiled for the same debates, and the jesuists, who still bewailed the ruins of their establishments, were furious at the return of a body who had destroyed them, and whom they had dissolved in their turn.

Such was the state of France, of eminent individuals, and of factions, at the accession of Lewis XVI. to the throne. It ought here to be observed, that this is the first measure favourable to liberty which was devised by the government itself. It related to the solemn recall of a body, which had disputed the ground inch by inch against the authority of the state; and the destruction of another body submissive, which

had since become the support of it. It related to the re-establishment of an austere opposition of jansenists, to the pleasures and the will of the court; and the humiliation of the jesuitical party, which, since the elevation of the duke of Aiguillon, had obtained the superiority. It related to an act of great policy, which tended to effect a change in the character of the executive power; and the decisive stroke of a party, the object of which was to raise the machine of state, thrown upon one side, and fix it in the opposite direction.

Under cardinal de Fleury, the state was governed according to the maxims of Lewis XV.

The duke of Choiseul, in overthrowing the party and order of jesuits, and in protecting the principles of philosophy, gaining ground in the nation, gave a degree of consequence, unknown before, to the spirit of political inquiry.

The exile of the duke of Choiseul, and the calling into administration the duke of Aiguillon, re-established the old maxims of Lewis XIV., the principles of absolute authority, and rendered the parliaments useless.

At this time, the party in opposition to the old parliaments, finding their situation painful, took advantage of the weakness of government to resume the places which they had lost, and to revive legally at the side of the throne the

austere opposition of the parliaments. The circumstances of the times were so favourable to this, that they could not but soon render this party superior to the real and military force of the court.

The fiftieth day after the accession of young Lewis XVI. to the throne, M. de Maurepas dispatched an order, recalling M. Hue de Miroménil, a distinguished member among those who had been sent into exile. Hue had shared with Maurepas in the sorrows of proscription, and endeavoured to soften them by one of those expedients of complaisance, which flatter men of the character of Maurepas. The latter was fond of buffoonery, puns, and farcical entertainments: Hue, desirous of gratifying him, played the comedy and part of Crispin. It was this M. Hue that M. de Maurepas proposed to make keeper of the seals to a king young and weak in character, for constituting anew the old parliaments.

The project of this choice transpired. In a little time the members of M. de Maupeou's parliament were every-where, and all of a sudden, loaded with insults, provoked and paid by the ministry. They had sacrificed themselves to the despotism of Lewis XV., and now his successor punished them on account of this sacrifice. The members who had been insulted

assembled together, to confer about the reports of their destruction, and passed a resolution to write to Lewis XVI., intreating him to make known to his faithful parliament his royal will and pleasure, to quiet their apprehensions, and to dissipate, by his authority, the sinister reports, injurious to the credit of their body, and prejudicial to the service of the king. The president had several conferences with the chancellor Maupeou, whom he found in the greatest embarrassment, not even giving the least answer.

In the beginning of July 1774, madame Adélaide, the bigoted bishops, Beaumont archbishop of Paris, madame de Marsan, the abbé Radonvilliers, ex-jesuit, who had been employed in the education of Lewis XVI., seeing their faction in danger, and threatened with the return of the common enemy, flock round Lewis XVI., whom they find still disposed to maintain the absolute authority of the monarchy and the extinction of the old parliament; but the party of the chancellor Maupeou attacks the young prince in the most sensible part. Maupeou, knowing the aversion which the king entertains to the duke of Choiseul, accuses that courtier of having spread a report over Europe, that neither the king nor his brothers would ever have any children. In this situation, he accuses the duke of Orleans, and particu-

larly the duke of Chartres, with conspiring against the tranquillity of the state, by forming in the old parliament a party unfavourable to the interests of the Spanish branch. He declares, that this was the sole object of the Orleans' family, who had never abandoned the hope of reigning in France, at the expence of the safety and tranquillity of the legitimate heir of the crown. The king was highly offended at the imputation thrown by M. de Maupeou on the family of Orleans. A sense of personal injury animated him, the factions exasperated him, and the members of administration found it necessary to refrain from speaking either of the old or new parliament. This was not the case with the aunts of the king. To work upon the mind of their nephew, they hastened to the royal apartment, where, without being either announced or attended, they all three threw themselves at the king's feet, imploring him, with tears in their eyes, not to dishonour the memory of their father, by re-establishing a criminal assembly which he had degraded; but to look to the consequences that would ensue from re-establishing a tribunal, always refractory to the royal authority, and abolishing one, which was select and submissive.

Madame Louisa, yet more bold, complained to the king of the queen's conduct in this situa-

tion, and related to him all the rumours which were spread concerning her behaviour and morals, and the part she had had the indiscretion to act in an affair of this nature. The king answered, by recommending to her to confine herself to the affairs of the monastery which she had chosen for her retreat; but this reply had no effect upon her.

The day of devotional service for the late king, at Saint Denis, was near; and such was the animosity of the two parties, that it was doubted whether they would both attend on the occasion. It became necessary for the court itself to negotiate with the princes, the peers, and the parliament established by Lewis XV., and regulate the service to the circumstances. The prince of Conty and the house of Orleans were averse to making their appearance with the members of the new parliament. In the former devotional services for the kings, the parliament and the peers of France had made the customary protests together. "At present," said the peers, "we do not protest, the parliament is absent." The privy-council was likewise divided in the same manner.

The count de Vergennes, formerly disgraced by the duke of Choiseul, and professing to entertain different sentiments, both with respect to foreign politics and that which related to the

internal government of the state, opposed the return of the parliaments abolished by Lewis XV. Recently returned from his embassy in Sweden, where he had abolished the power of the senate, in order to raise the authority of the royal and French party; religious even to bigotry, a partisan of the jesuits, weak of character, reserved in his opinions; he expressed himself on the occasion with great force. Professing to apprehend, that the monarchy would be ruined by the return of the abolished and exiled parliament, he exerted all his abilities and delivered a speech on the old and new parliament, worthy to be recorded in history for its principles and observations.

" Did not the old exiled parliament," said he, " deserve to be chastised by the late king?

" Had not the king the power to suppress the parliaments by virtue of his authority?

" In either case then, would it not be more dangerous to re-establish the exiled parliament, than to suffer the continuance of the new, with all the faults imputed to it?"

This minister decided these several questions himself. He described the old parliaments as rivals of the royal authority, and as guilty of excesses the most dangerous to the safety of the state. He proved, that, in the balance of the two powers, the power of the parliament ought

to yield to that of the government, from which, in the nature of things, it derived its existence. He confirmed his doctrine by the authority of the celebrated Daguesseau. He said, that if the abolished parliament should ever be restored, the king would open a gulf, in which he should see the monarchy precipitated. The count de Vergennes died before the memorable epoch when these parliaments stripped Lewis XVI. of the power of imposing taxes.

Maurepas, who professed contrary sentiments, replied to M. de Vergennes with puns and quibbles. The king, fluctuating and undecided, impelled on one side by his love of the people, and on the other by the desire of preserving his authority, unwilling at this time to adopt the council either of Vergennes or Maurepas, adjourned the meeting. But Maurepas, who saw the storm arising, who had no inclination "to be dragged upon a sledge," and who had already drawn upon himself the hatred of Maupeou's parliament, resolved to hasten the catastrophe which he projected for the existing parliament, by the public disgrace of the ministers of the late king, who formed the majority of the council, and who opposed the re-establishment of the exiled magistracy.

The disgrace of Terray and the chancellor Maupeou was effected on St. Bartholomew's

day. The inhabitants of Paris, transported with joy, called it "the St. Bartholomew of the ministers." That perpetual carrier of *lettres-de-cachet*, the duke of Vrillière, informing the chancellor Maupeou of his disgrace, the chancellor, without betraying any emotion, replied like a man who had searched into and estimated the character of the king and of Maurepas: "There are the seals," said he to M. de la Vrillière, "the king may dispose of them; but as to my dignity of chancellor of France, I preserve it; it cannot be taken from me but by a process; such are the constituent laws of the state." Maupeou received and dismissed la Vrillière in the style of a chancellor of France in full office and credit, without rising from his seat, even when a minister came on business from the king.

The party of the exiled parliaments triumphed; but, incapable of enjoying its victory with moderation, it stirred up a number of attorney's clerks and other young persons interested in the event, and, on the night of the 28th and 29th of August, by the light of flambeaux, the chancellor and the abbé Terray were burned in effigy. M. de Maupeou's parliament wished to lay informations against these nocturnal revellings; and the archbishop of Paris, seeing his party totter, held some meetings

on the occasion. Madame Louisa wrote, from St. Denis, to the king, some extremely pressing letters. At this time she spoke in the name of the divine protectress of the august destinies of the house of Bourbon. The victorious party exciting the people, the capital abandoned itself to extraordinary rejoicings, on account of the return of the parliaments, and the fall of Terray and Maupeou; and the king, who had not been well received by the Parisians, the last time he passed by the boulevards, understood, that since his resolution, favourable to the exiled parliaments, preparations had been made at Paris for the people's drawing him in his coach to the castle of Versailles. The prince of Conty, one of the chiefs of the party of the exiled parliaments, wishing to enjoy on this occasion the triumph of his cause, made his appearance at the opera, and was loaded with the applauses of the people, who were intoxicated with joy at the approaching return of the parliaments, and, above all, at the retractation of the authority by which they had been persecuted. Authority was no longer considered as infallible in France. In this situation, the ministry thought only of executing the resolutions of M. de Maurepas. For some weeks the old minister re-united with himself, periodically, Turgot, Miroménil, and Sartines, and con-

certed with them about preparing his counter-revolution of the parliament. The duke of Orleans quietly waited the issue of the affair at St. Assise; and the queen, piqued at the behaviour of the king's aunts, kept constantly an eye upon her husband, to prevent any communications which might either change his resolution, or render him undecided.

Railleries, affronts, and gross insults, announced to Maupeou's parliament the approaching blow which the queen and count de Maurepas were meditating against it. The first president went to Versailles to mollify the count, who seemed to be the original author or instigator of the affronts and sarcasms. "We can no longer appear in public," said the commissioners, who were deputed from the parliament to make remonstrances at court on the subject. "Put on dominos then," replied the count, "and you will neither be insulted nor known;" a sarcasm unworthy of the royal authority, and which I have heard cited for ten years at Paris, every time the king stood in need of a person to transact any delicate business. The president Rolland, a member of the old exiled parliament, asked permission of Miroménil to return to Paris on his private affairs, and waited on him in state, and in the robes of president, to return him thanks. The keeper of the seals

ordered notice to be given to the other exiles, that they might demand their return. Their haughtiness during their retreat already indicated what they would one day become, when reinstated in office. They were resolved to enjoy the importance of their exile, and the interest which it inspired. In this strange conduct of M. de Maurepas may, in our opinion, be traced some of the misfortunes of the young monarch, whose goodness and justice were already the object of scorn to this magistracy, who extinguished, before their return, the sympathy and concern which France had manifested upon their exile.

In the provinces, the parliaments established by Lewis XV. experienced every day new outrages. That of Bretany was so rudely treated, that the advocates were intimidated from exercising their profession, and grossly insulted by the populace. They consulted M. Hue de Miromènil, keeper of the seals, who answered, conformably to his character, in an ambiguous manner. The parliament thus degraded, made a tender of their resignation; they asked leave to retire into a foreign country, and to be permitted to sell their estates, that they might withdraw themselves from the reproach and outrages, which were become the

last recompence of a blind devotion to the late king. M. Hue returned no answer.

The members of the privy-council were still divided in their sentiments: Miroménil, Maurepas, Sartines, and Turgot, insisted upon the return of the old exiled parliament.

The count de Vergennes, Daguesseau, Bertin, and la Vrillière, were united for the preservation of that which was established. Du Muy, the friend of the late dauphin, improved, as much as was in his power, the influence which the memory of that prince might have upon the mind of the young king. La Vrillière distinguished himself by his firmness in censuring the conduct of the exiled parliaments. The king's aunts, who passed their time in discontent at Bellevue, and were not of the party at Fontainebleau, where these transactions occurred, resolved to set out for the purpose of making one more effort to prevail upon their nephew. Monsieur wrote a memoir in favour of the parliaments of M. de Maupeou. The queen produced a second on the opposite side. It is now time to consider the revolution which M. de Maurepas was meditating in the bosom of the government.

CHAP.

Developement of the Principles of Public Right, supported by Monsieur, Brother of Lewis XVI., as to leaving the old Parliaments in their State of Annihilation.—Account of the Dangers of the Royal Authority depending upon their Return.—Jesuitical Submission of the real Parliaments which had been exiled.—Predictions of Monsieur, Brother to the King.

THE king, a mere spectator of these disputes, gave sanction to both parties by the want of decision in his character. This prince, however, was not destitute either of sagacity or foresight. Strength of mind, to execute what he judged most expedient for his interests, was the great defect he laboured under. Considerations of the greatest importance were now submitted to his judgment by both parties. On one side the exiled parliaments were represented to him as factious bodies, always animated against the royal authority, always inclined to shake it, always ready to appropriate to themselves a part of it, and always harassing the French government, obliged definitively, in order to put an end to these quarrels, to extinguish this violent opposition, and disperse the members of it. The memorials of this party spoke nearly in the following terms:

" If the king should re-establish the exiled parliaments, France would soon behold republican senators, resembling the senates of Genoa, Venice, or Berne, establish themselves in its bosom, and the king would hardly enjoy in it the power of the doge. These parliaments; the determined enemies of the principles of monarchical government, would in a short time re-establish their ancient pretensions, and would contest with the royal house its legitimate authority.

" Observe what passed in Bretany on the return of the parliaments, dissolved and re-established during the administration of the duke of Aiguillon. The returned members, restored to their functions under the title of favour, expelled their colleagues, who had conducted themselves in office with fidelity; some they suspended, others they subjected to penalties, and all of them they abused; they annulled their judgments and decrees, they united themselves in confederacy with other parliaments of the kingdom, they kindled a general flame, which was extinguished only by the total destruction of the tribunals, in 1771.

" After the example above recited, who would ever think of re-uniting proscribed parliaments to others in place? Some proclaim as virtue, what others declare to be crimes; some maintain that

obedience to the king is the duty of subjects; while others affirm the most sacred duty to be that of resistance.

"The partisans for the return of the magistracy wish it as a blessing of peace. What peace is that which is purchased at the expence of the royal authority, of the abandonment, the ruin, the dishonour, and the sacrifice of the most faithful subjects? Besides, is not such a peace illusory and uncertain? Will the members of the parliaments, when irritated by persecution, abjure the maxims of resistance, which they account it their glory to profess?

"In the existing order, on the contrary, what advantages to the state! Has the parliament mistaken the source of its authority? It relied on the inviolable declaration of the late king, who pronounced himself these memorable words: "I will never alter my resolution." It has replaced the members, who, by a federal defection, had merited the royal indignation: it came at the call of the sovereign, and the cries of France, who desired of the king to give them magistrates: it has sacrificed every thing for its country. Ought it to be reduced to nothing?"

In this situation of affairs, Monsieur, the king's brother, published a memorial against the exiled parliaments. "This parliament," said he, "had erected in the state an authority which

rivaled that of its monarchs, to establish a monstrous equilibrium, the effect of which was to chain down the administration, and throw the kingdom into anarchy. What authority would remain to the king, if these parliaments, united together by a general association, should yet form one body, that could oppose a combined resistance; if, assuming the power of suspending their functions at pleasure, they intercept in all the provinces the course of that justice, which the king owes to his people? It was during their general disobedience, in this respect, that the late king was obliged to deprive them of their offices, in order to preserve to his subjects what he owed them, the exercise of justice. For ages past, the parliaments maintained an intestine war with the kings; it was under the pretext of the public good, and the interests of the people, which were constantly sacrificed, that they did this: and can the state now, by recalling these parliaments to the functions of which they have been so justly deprived, acknowledge that it has been unjust and oppressive? Shall the late king be accused, condemned and convicted of having oppressed, harassed, exiled, and stripped his most faithful tribunals? What an example for the kings that follow! Will Lewis XVI. condemn his predecessor? For the purpose of supporting the crown, Lewis XV. had promoted

those members who now are in office, and had sent into exile those who trampled upon it. Will Lewis XVI. abandon the men who supported the crown to the malice of those who were resolved to degrade it?

"Will the king confiscate the places of an obedient parliament, which has re-established the crown on the head of kings, to give them to a parliament, which had attempted to dethrone him? Will he abandon the members of a faithful parliament to the public scorn, to the outrages and persecutions of a parliament, vindictive and flushed with victory on its return? Will he again abandon his kingdom to the persecution of a parliament, inimical to the clergy, and which rivals the nobility, who are the true support of the government? Will he surrender it to a parliament that would wring from the people exorbitant fees, that made an open traffic of justice, and, in all their decisions, were accustomed to throw into the scale the whole weight of their passions and principles? Is it forgotten, that this exiled parliament excited among the people the most dangerous commotions, and distributed money for purchasing the appearance of popularity to intimidate the government? After such instances of political profligacy, what man of penetration can avoid entertaining apprehensions for the fu-

ture? Under a young and good-natured king, will it not attempt new enterprises? Supported by a party of the princes, will it not indulge the daring hopes of one day subjecting the court to its own uncontrouled authority? And, above all, persuaded that there is no reason to dread the creation of another superior tribunal, will it not display its power and independence by every possible excess?

"I shall be told, that the exiled magistrates will not be reinstated but upon terms of great constraint: but what security do they give the king for the faithful observance of them? They will make their entrance into office as gentle as lambs; but, when confirmed in their places, will change into lions, and will cloke their proceedings under the pretext of the interests of the state, of the people, and of *their lord the king*. In the very act of disobedience, they will affirm that they do not disobey; the people will run to their support, and the royal authority will one day fall down, over-powered by the weight of their resistance. Such will be the effect of sacrificing a dutiful parliament to the rebellious and exiled magistracy.

"Honoured with the confidence of the king, and accountable to the nation for the measures of his government, M. de Maurepas will not fail to see, in the exile of the parliament, a so-

lemn and just judgment, in which he is not permitted to interfere. He will regard the revolution effected by Lewis XV. as the support of the state, and of the internal tranquillity which we have enjoyed for three years, and he will preserve to France the stability which that revolution will secure to the government."

CHAP. XV.

Developements of the Principles of Public Right, maintained by the Faction favourable to the exiled Parliaments, for obtaining their Re-establishment.—Sketch of the Dangers of Despotism resulting from their actual Annihilation.—Predictions of the House of Orleans, if the old Parliaments should not be immediately restored.

THE several memorials, notes, and observations of the duke of Orleans and his party, in favour of the exiled parliaments, were equally specious and forcible. They formed a bundle of more than thirty papers. The protest of the princes of the blood, of the 4th of April 1771, against the abolition of the parliaments, was the chief and most conclusive amongst them. Lewis XV. was scarcely seated on the throne, when the house of Orleans laid before him a particular memorial, accompanied with several others, for procuring the return of the exiled parliament. The importance of this great affair of state demands that we should here preserve the spirit and principal observations in it, as a monument of the public right, which the revolution was soon to abolish, as a voucher of the dangerous political situation and condition of the French.

In these different memorials, the princes affirmed, that they were animated with the protection of the interests of the nation, the king and his family, the nobility, the peerage, and the people. They declared, upon their conscience and honour, their attachment to those interests, " even to death." They declared against every sitting, forced or voluntary, of the princes of the blood, " against even their own sitting," in any other parliament than that of Paris, against the confiscations of the offices, and against every establishment of a court different from that which existed before the exile. They declared, that they could not recognise the court of the kings, the princes, and the peers, in the new institution of M. de Maupeou: they affirmed, that the real parliament was composed of the king, the princes of the blood, the peerage, and the members whose places had been arbitrarily confiscated, without forfeiture or any previous judgment. They raised their voices against the violences exercised upon the persons of the exiled parliament by the military, during the night. They exclaimed against the eventual penalties inserted in the *lettres-de-cachet*. They appealed to posterity for the lawfulness of their claims, and lamented that every avenue to the throne was shut up against just and respectful representations. They declared themselves

solely amenable to the jurisdiction of the old parliament, as being born members of that fellowship, which no confiscation had ever been able either to mutilate or abolish, the places being permanent and personal, except in cases of forfeiture, and others determined by the constitution. They invoked the public right, the laws, the customs of France, which, by their very essence, were indissoluble, as to the stability of the parliament. They cited Lewis XIV., who acknowledged himself to be subject to the laws of his kingdom, and manifested a desire to reign not more by authority than by the love of his people, the exercise of justice, and the observance of the forms and established rules of the realm.

They maintained, that the nobility of the kingdom, the peers, and the princes of the blood-royal, had the right of being judged only by the chief juridical body, immoveable, indissolvable, and national; that, under whatever form this tribunal had existed in France, whether it was named the *field of Mars*, a court of law, a plenary court, the states-general, or parliament, it had been in all times one of the essential constituent parts of the French government, acting with the monarch for the good of the state, the formation, the promulgation, and the execution of the law; that immoveability

was essential to the tribunals entrusted with supreme and important functions, they having been always considered as the safeguards of public liberty, as ramparts against arbitrary power, and, in a word, as intimately connected with the fundamental laws of the state; and, therefore, that such high functions exacted of the magistrates, the peers, and the princes of the blood, required the strongest security that, in in their exercise, in dispensing justice to the people, they should have nothing to dread from the influence of authority by following the dictates of their conscience; that the most valuable part of the public prerogatives of France was that which ensured to the immoveable tribunals, recognised, at all times, by kings and the nation, the stability requisite for the preservation of the general rights of the public and of individuals, for the protection of the laws, for the effectual decision of just claims, for access to the prince, for the verification of the laws, for their comparison with anterior laws, and for representations necessary for preserving the harmony, the morals, and public rights of the nation.

Such were the general maxims contained in the memorials and protests of the princes of the blood. The abbé Mably, reputed the most learned man of the age, and the most skilled in

the knowledge of the constitution and rights of the nation, was the secret compiler of these works. Accordingly, when, towards the approach of the revolution, he was prevailed on to publish his *Observations on the History of France*, the government eagerly bought up the edtion, which was secreted in the Bastille.

The parliament had recourse to a different author: this was the president de Meinières, who had by his erudition given great uneasiness to madame de Pompadour, when she meddled in the affairs of the parliaments. This president furnished, in these times, some valuable pieces in the defence of his associates.

The parliaments carried their principles and assertions much farther than the princes of the blood. They penetrated into the labyrinth of the primitive rights of the nation and the prince: they touched the limits which separate monarchy and despotism; "they rent asunder," according to the expression of the partizans of absolute power, "the sacred veils, which, for the happiness of the people, concealed the points of contact, in those delicate objects of speculation." They vigorously opposed the maxim of the French monarchs, who, in their edicts and public speeches, had proclaimed incessantly for ages "that they held their crown only of God."

They objected to this royal assertion, that, if the king held his crown of God, it was in the same manner, and by the same operation, that the Deity directs, by his providence, all the affairs of this world. To this political expedient, of fortifying monarchy by the countenance of heaven, they opposed the genealogical succession of the French kings, and the election or consent of the people beginning with the national and voluntary elevation of Pharamond upon his buckler.

With respect to the military assertion, that the king held his authority by the sword, the parliament and its partizans opposed in their memorials, that Hugh Capet, the head of the reigning family, had been elected in open violation of the anterior rights of another family. "The conquest of a crown by arms," said they, "is not a right; it is the consent of the people that confers right."

According to these observations, the king was neither proprietor nor absolute master of the crown. He held it only in trust, for the purpose of governing in conformity to the laws. He had no inherent right to render the form of the government absolute; he was only the most noble, the superior branch of the state; but very different from the princes who govern at Tunis, Tripoli, or Constantinople; where the executive authority is united with the generalship;

whereas in France the kings, ever since Clovis, have relinquished the generalship, to invest themselves with the supreme, legislative, and administrative power, so distinct from the power of the sword; to become, not the head of a conquering troop, but that of a great state, over whom they were to rule by the laws, not by arms; to direct the military force not against the state, but against the enemies of the state, separating, under pain of violating the character of the nation, the functions of the sword from those of the sceptre and crown. It was thus that they analysed the prerogatives and duties of the *kings of the Franks*.

From these general observations, the princes, the writers on the constitution, the members of the exiled parliaments, and their partizans, concluded in their different memorials, that the violent measure of Lewis XV. against the parliaments was unjust, repugnant to the interests of the state, and subversive of its general forms and constitutions. They asserted, that military despotism succeeded in France to a temporary monarchy, and a servile obsequiousness in favour of royalty to the free and open character of citizens. They called the acts of government relative to a dissolution of the parliaments, an arbitrary usurpation of property; and they affirmed, that the royal power became virtually

extinct by the revolution in the magistracy in 1771. Such is the substance of the memorials favourable to the exiled parliaments: we there find the quality of *citizen* significantly employed for the first time.

Jean Jacques Rousseau had already given this word a signification unknown to the vulgar; but the parliaments, who knew the force of it, adopted it in their remonstrances: since that time they have gradually substituted the word *citizen* for that of a subject of the king of France, which was the usual denomination, and formerly marked the relation of the French to their monarchs; so much did the language of national manners indicate the approach of the French towards a new form of government, and an abolition of the ancient maxims.

The extraordinary memorial of the duke of Orleans at the accession of Lewis XVI. to the crown, to obtain of him the re-establishment of the parliaments, did not contain these new and philosophical principles of public right. The duke of Orleans confined himself to the purpose of representing to Lewis XVI., with much discretion, decency, and respect, that the crown had derived great advantage from the constitutional form of the parliaments. He showed that this assembly, to which the concurring assent of the kings and people had accorded the

"right" of remonstrating to the state, and the "power" of maintaining our fundamental laws in full force, could not be destroyed, cut to pieces, or divested of their offices, without the greatest inconveniences to the interests of the king and the nation. He said, that our history abounded with memorable examples, both of faults committed by government, when neglecting to attend to remonstrances, and of favourable events, the success of which had depended on the concurrence of the parliaments with the government. The duke of Orleans employed expressions calculated to touch "the paternal heart of Lewis XVI., if inclined," said he, "to goodness and justice;" and he requested a new testimony of that disposition, in conjuring him to restore to the parliaments their privileges, and recall them from exile.

CHAP. XVI.

Character of Lewis XVI. in the midst of these Debates.—Remonstrances of the established Parliaments—Answer of the King.

I HAVE recited above the most plausible reasons of the party that demanded the repeal of the parliaments, and those of the opposite party that wished them to remain in exile. The mind of the public was equally agitated. The nation felt itself deeply interested in this great and important cause, which related to the principles of its existence, and to the duration of the forms of its constitution. The point at issue plainly was, whether the monarch could establish a power purely military, or whether he ought to admit the forms of a temperate monarchy. It has been seen, that the representations of Monsieur were prophetic; he had collected the ideas, the conversations, and the memoirs of his aunts, with those of count de Vergennes, of M. du Muy, madame de Marsan, the archbishop of Paris, and, above all, of the jesuits. The re-union of their views and principles was the sole reason of state to which it

was necessary to pay regard for the preservation of the ancient monarchy. The king, who had a sound judgment, acknowledged afterwards to madame Adélaide, that the side which she had taken in these debates was the safest, and that it would have been more prudent to suffer things to remain in the state in which his grandfather had left them; but he owned that the love of his people, who seemed to desire the re-establishment of the old magistracy, had prevailed on him more than the love of power, and that he had resolved to recall the parliaments chiefly for the purpose of restraining the abuses of the royal authority.... A revolution is imminent, and the government turned out of its natural course, when the state calls exclusively into its administration jansenistical opinions and parties. Lewis XVI. was fully persuaded of this truth, and yet he laid the foundation himself of this deep and metaphysical revolution, when he agreed to the return of the rebellious and exiled parliament, and the extinction of an assembly which was obsequious and submissive. We shall see the king, in many circumstances of his reign, support this revolution, which he had begun in 1774, and favour incessantly the popular interests of dawning liberty, in preference to the interests of power.

The 21st of October, 1774, is the epoch of the edict which fixed the day for the return of the

exiles. The chamber of vacations of the parliament of M. de Maupeou, alarmed at this measure, presented to the king their respectful representations concerning the reports which were current of the approaching ruin of a parliament, that had accepted its commission only in obedience to the king. Lewis XVI., indulgent to the exiled parliament, appeared unjust, severe, and scornful, to that which was submissive: he answered, "that he was surprised the chamber of vacations should make any remonstrances to him upon mere public reports," and thus avoided the making known to them his intentions. Monsieur represented, that it was impossible to form a respectable council of this parliament, which would be disparaged, reviled, persecuted, and loaded with maledictions, affronts, and outrages: "I recapitulate," said he to the king his brother, "the services of the existing, and the crimes of the exiled parliament. The existing parliament has replaced, upon the head of the king, the crown, which the exiled parliament had taken from him; and M. de Maupeou, whom you have sent into banishment, has gained for the king the process, which the kings, your ancestors, have maintained with the parliaments during the two last centuries: the trial has been de-

cided, and you, brother, rescind the decision, to begin the litigation anew."

The chamber of vacations, seeing itself upon the brink of a precipice, had recourse to a superfluous resolution, and, invoking the principles of the tottering monarchy, it declared the royal authority to be in danger, and announced its fall.

The parliament, submissive to the king, was in effect rejected by the royal authority, and the refractory parliament recompensed. Nothing but a constitution was now wanted in France, to subvert the ancient monarchy from its foundations.

In the progress of this transaction, the king was not destitute either of information or advice; he carefully collected the opinions and memoirs on the subject; he classed them in his cabinet with particular attention, and he wrote, on the covers of the memoirs of the two parties, these words: "Opinions favourable to the return of the old parliaments;" "Opinions favourable to the existing parliaments;" and he embraced that which was to him the most fatal. The parliament, a few years after, joined the malcontents of the kingdom: it united with the Orleanists, and contributed with them to dethrone him.

The exiled parliaments being reinstated, or rather the popular revolution in their favour be-

ing accomplished, the victorious party testified their joy by feastings and songs, in the spirit of our national character. Collé, secretary to the duke of Orleans, sung the victory of the parliament to the air *Chansons, chansons*; as follows:

Un esprit fort *, dont notre histoire
Nous conservera la mémoire
Dans tous les tems,
Aux compagnons de sa victoire
Disait qu'il ne fallait pas croire
Aux revenans.

Il s'en souvient: ils s'en souviennent;
Mais quand les revenans reviennent,
Après quatre ans,
Leur apparition notoire
Force d'en revenir à croire
Aux revenans.

"A hero renowned *, whose magnanimous name
Stands now, and shall long, on the records of fame,
Amid her chief boasts,
Told the phalanx who shared in his conquests and glories,
That they never should credit the infantine stories
Of revivified ghosts.

"'Twas by him, 'twas by them, long remembered full well;
But when, four years after, the spectres so fell
Returned to their posts,
Their undoubted appearance, in spite of his heed,
Called back all his comrades again to the creed
Of revivified ghosts.

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* M. de Maupeou told all the members whom he established in the parliament, not to be frightened at the *revenans*.

Grand roi, ta divine puissance
Evoque les ombres en France:
Spectres errans,
Apparaissez, bravez l'envie,
Louis rend l'honneur et la vie
Aux revenans.

Les dieux sont dieux par leur clémence,
Et c'est à regret qu'on encense
Les dieux tonnans;
Deviens dieu par ta bienfaisance:
Tu l'es déjà par la présence
Des revenans.

Sur ces ombres patriotiques,
Et de leurs couronnes civiques,
Tout rayonnans,
Plâne le romain Malesherbes,
L'un des grands et des moins superbes
Des revenans.

"Great monarch, thy power raises spectres in France,
Pale shades o'er our plains, that so friendly advance
From their tenebrous coasts;
O Lewis, persist, confound envy's vain strife,
Persist, and give substance, give honour and life,
To the phantoms of ghosts!

"Gods are gods chief by goodness; who rouses their ire
Soon shall feel, to his cost, the retributive fire
Their thunderbolt boasts.
Be a god by thy bounty; already thou art
By thy power, from the tomb that bids multitudes start
Of revivified ghosts.

"O'er these shades patriotic, these shades of renown,
Each bedecked with the blaze of a rich civic crown,
That illumines their hosts,
Hovers Malesherbes the Roman, supremely endowed,
Though one of the chiefs, yet perhaps the least proud
Of revivified ghosts.

Toi, Miroménil, ombre fière,
Toi, du trône et de la barrière
L'un des tenans ;
Avec quel doux transport, chère ombre,
Nous t'avons d'abord vu au nombre
Des revenans !

Toi, revenant, qui fus des nôtres,
Toi, qui fais revenir les autres,
Et le bon tems ;
Ministre sans titre et sans gages,
Maurepas, reçois les hommages
Des revenans.

Au comble aujourd'hui de la gloire,
Puisse-tu lire nôtre histoire
Dans cinquante ans,
Tu t'y verrais, sur ma parole,
Jouer le plus auguste rôle
Des revenans.

" Thou, too, Miroménil, redoubtable shade !
Thou, the champion of thrones when base traitors invade,
Best support of our coasts ;
With what transport, loved spirit ! what sunshine of hopes,
Surveyed we at first thy dear form 'mid the groups
Of revivified ghosts !

" Thou, spectre revered ! one of us who wast erst,
Thou who others lead'st back from the land of the curst,
Lead'st the season of boasts ;
Great minister, void both of title and fee,
Accept, Maurepas ! the pure homage to thee
Presented by ghosts.

" In the midst of these glories the fates now dispense,
Couldst thou trace, through our history, fifty years hence,
What remains for our coasts,
E'en then wouldst thou see, (I predict undismayed,)
That the part most august by thyself would be played
Of revivified ghosts.

M. de Beaumont, archbishop of Paris, mortified on all sides, opposed the song of his almoner to that of Collé, secretary to the duke of Orleans. It is as follows;

L'esprit fort *, vainqueur des obstacles,
Avait appuyé ses oracles
Sur le bon sens;
L'esprit frivole † a mis sa gloire
A consacrer dans nôtre histoire
Les revenans.

Quoiqu'en disent les préambules,
Et toutes royales cédules;
Hochets d'enfant;
Pour le tróne et pour son ministre,
C'est un phénomène sinistre,
Qu'un revenant.

"A brave mind *, that to obstacles never would yield,
To the luminous oracle having appealed,
That good sense ever boasts;
A mind far more frivolous † made it his glory
To preserve in our national annals the story
Of revivified ghosts.

"Let them say what they will, all our statutes and laws,
All our edicts that buoy up so childish a cause,
Baby-rattles at most;
To the throne, and the minister, should he appear,
He would prove but an omen unlucky, I fear,
This revivified ghost.

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* Maupeou.
† Maurepas.

Sortis gonflés de leurs ténèbres,
Résolus pour être célèbres
D'être insolens,
Tyrans sans frein, et sans contrainte,
Ils vont justifier la crainte
Des revenans.

Applaudis-toi, romain Malesherbes,
D'être jugé le moins superbe
De ces tyrans ;
Plaise à Louis, que sous ta trace
Disparaisse la populace
Des revenans !

Toi, long d'échine, et court de vue,
Phrasier bouffi, monseigneur Hue,
L'un des tenans
De Sixte-Quint, froid plagiaire,
Recule, et cède la barrière
Aux revenans !

" Rising, puffed up with pride, from their mansions so dire,
Resolved, e'en by insolence, fame to acquire
All over our coasts;
Tyrants void of all bond, of all bridle devoid,
They strive men should back to the dread be decoyed
Of hobgoblins and ghosts.

" Roman Malesherbes, with every pure virtue endowed,
Enjoy the fond praise that thyself art least proud
Of these tumefied hosts ;
May Lewis, by means of thy guidance, dispel,
And drive back, all forlorn and confounded, to hell
Thy whole rabble of ghosts !

" Thou ! with back an ell long, but with sight scarce an inch,
Babbler loud, my lord Gab, whose tongue never can flinch,
Whate'er subject accosts ;
Of Sixte-Quinte, frigid plagiarist, champion renowned,
Fall back, and lead home to their barriers profound
All thy group of pale ghosts.

O roi ! tu cherches la justice,
Et l'on conduit au précipice
Tes pas tremblans.
Où sont les rênes de ton trône ?
Hélas ! ta main les abandonne
Aux revenans.

Redoutes le calme éphémère
Dans le foyer parlementaire
Etincelant ;
On va discuter ta clémence,
Et te mettre dans la balance
Des revenans.

" O monarch ! thy aim is pure justice ;—but still
Thy steps towards a precipice tread, at the will
Of these turbulent hosts.
Where, where are the reins that should honour thy hands ?
Abandoned, alas ! to the insolent bands
Of revivified ghosts.

" Distrust the bright calm of a moment's delay,
Like meteors, at night, full of mischief that play,
Which the parliament boasts ;
Thy bounty they wish should no longer prevail,
And thyself be reduced to the infamous scale
Of their own group of ghosts."

CHAP. XVII.

Considerations on the Ministers left by Lewis XV. to his Successor; on their Principles and Characters; on the Blemishes in their Morals, and the Force of their Authority.—Considerations on the Day called the St. Bartholomew of the Ministers.—*Portraits of Boynes and Terray, of the Prince of Soubise, M. Maupeou, and Marshal du Muy.—Inattention to the ancient Military Principles of the House of Bourbon in the Ministry.—First Establishments of Liberty in the Bosom of the Government.*

LEWIS XVI., in order to effect a revolution in the parliaments, introduced into the ministry a very remarkable one. Let us here consider the influence and character of the day named the *St. Bartholomew of the Ministers.*

Lewis XVI., on his accession to the throne, had found the authority intrusted to persons who were inclined to despotism. Their morals were atrocious; but the authority was at that time firmly established on its basis.

The abbé Terray, so base and contemptible, had considerable strength of character, and was fertile in expedients for supporting the royal authority. The chancellor Maupeou, the au-

thor of that terrible revolution in the parliaments which smothered the first sparks of liberty in France, was of a character similar to Terray.

La Vrillière, a man distinguished for his apathy and weakness, seemed for several years to occupy a seat in the cabinet, merely for the purpose of executing military orders.

The duke of Aiguillon inherited from his ancestors the system of military power, in its utmost extent.

De Boynes and Bertin, with the prince of Soubise himself, acknowledged no other principle in the constitution but absolute authority.

Lewis XVI., on dismissing the duke of Aiguillon, had appointed M. de Muy and the count de Vergennes, who maintained similar opinions. To whatever side, therefore, M. de Maurepas turned himself, for executing his projects with regard to the re-establishment of the parliaments, he found men deaf to his voice, and who entertained opposite sentiments.

The *St. Bartholomew of the ministers*, so named from the day of the exile of the ministers of Lewis XV., is the grand epoch of the fall of the ancient principles respecting the royal authority, and that of the first establishment of the friends of liberty in the bosom of the government. On that day the ancient opinions in

favour of monarchy ceased to operate in the nation, and those which were repugnant to the power of the house of Bourbon obtained an uncontrolled ascendancy. Lewis XVI. on that day recalled the parliament which had been exasperated by Lewis XV., to occupy the first offices in the government; he established at his side a majority in the ministry, inimical to powerful individuals, who had vengeance to exercise, and exiles to punish in their turn. M. H. de Miroménil, and M. de Malesherbes, quitting their exile, with the principles and practice of a parliament removed from court, and in opposition to it, could not fail, on uniting themselves with Turgot, Maurepas, and afterwards with St. Germain, to destroy the institutions of most importance to the nature of that power which had treated them with rigour and injustice, and to introduce in their room that fatal jansenism of principles, manners, and opinions, which accelerated the revolution of 1789.

Had the court continued to retain in its service one single minister who adhered to the ancient policy of the state in all its rigour, Lewis XVI. would have satisfied that numerous party of the French, who beheld with pleasure one member of the parliament enjoy a place in the cabinet; but the composition of a ministry

formed entirely of a parliament severe and discontented, the debasement of the submissive parliament, and the triumph of the refractory, according to the plan of M. de Maurepas, were the evident and final destruction of the spirit of the monarchy, such as it existed at that time. From the year 1774, the government contained in its very bosom the principle of its decline.

Let it be remembered into what extraordinary contempt the partisans of la Vrillière, Bertin, Terray, and Maupeou, fell.

Let it be recollected, on the contrary, what fame was acquired by the adherents of Malesherbes, Turgot, and Maurepas; and let us judge now of the error of those Frenchmen who wished to live under a monarchical government.

The former, by supporting obscurely in the council this mode of government, were disparaged by the people; the latter, by abolishing it with violence, were loaded with public favour. Yet, who among them would not have said at that time, that the probity of Turgot was the soul and life of a well constituted power, and that the immorality of Terray was its scourge? It was the misfortune of the time, that the virtues and talents of the different classes were misplaced by Lewis XVI. Their relative position was the source of the revo-

lutions. See in a subsequent part of these Memoirs the history of the administration of Turgot, Malesherbes, and St. Germain.

De Boynes was a man of capacity, and well informed, but a little uncivilised. He applied with pleasure to business in his closet. For a spirit of contention, he was the first man in the state. D'Aiguillon's party had associated him with Maupeou in the ministry, to extricate themselves from embarrassment; and, without inquiring whether he was capable of the office, made him minister of the marine. D'Aiguillon intimated at the same time to Maupeou, that de Boynes was brought there to fill his place, if he should not continue firm in the plan of dissolving the parliament. This artifice kept Maupeou upon his guard.

The king, before the dismission of de Boynes, showed him many tokens of friendship and confidence; which induced some persons to believe, that this prince knew, as well as his predecessors, how to dissemble friendship for those whom he meant next day to disgrace. M. de la Vrillière brought him a message from the king, thanking him for his services; and Turgot succeeded to his place.

The prince of Soubise was the only one of the first men at court that remained truly faithful to the memory of the king. An affecting anec-

dote was told of him. When the coffin containing the body of Lewis XV. was carrying to St. Denis in a most indecent manner, and without observing any ceremony, some pages who accompanied it were extremely desirous of being relieved from the task: the faithful Soubise, alone of all the numerous court which surrounded the king in his life-time, followed the remains of his late sovereign, which he never quitted till the body was deposited in the vault ordained for its reception.

His former connexions with the king had much diminished the esteem of the public towards him, and he had formed the resolution of retiring from court. But this anecdote of his attachment to the memory of the late king pleased Lewis XVI., who sent him an order, by madame de Marsan, to return to court, and take his place in the council.

The abbé Terray had shown in the parliament, from which the chancellor Maupeou had brought him to make him minister of the finances, a great facility in business, and a peculiar talent of imposing upon the judges in his reports. On becoming a minister, he took possession of the chests of mortmain, and suspended the reimbursement and effect of the edicts concerning the discharge of the public debt. In 1770, he converted into annuities for

life the tontines, the revenues of which accumulated in favour of the survivors, and he diminished the arrears of the crown. These acts of disregard to property excited against him a great fermentation among the renters, who had disposed of their capitals in favour of the state. He said in answer to their complaints, that he must leave the unfortunate people whom he had stripped to exclaim. He answered to M. Billon, archbishop of Narbonne, from whom I have the anecdote, and who observed to him, that it was taking money out of the pockets of the French to give it to Lewis XV.: "Whence would you, then, my lord, that I should take it?"

The members of the parliaments, seeing that he eluded the customary forms, and such as might be effectual for repressing these acts of violence in the minister, exclaimed loudly against him, and joined themselves to the renters, the public creditors, and the pensioners, whose payments he had suspended. The abbé, finding that they laboured to remove him from the ministry, where he wished, like the abbé Dubois, to become a cardinal, by selling himself, as the other had done, to the party of the jesuits, frustrated their project, and joined himself more closely to the chancellor Maupeou, for the purpose of accelerating the ruin of the parliaments. The more these su-

preme courts were animated against him, the more did he oppose bankruptcy to the complaints of the unfortunate, the clamours of violated justice, and the remonstrances of the parliaments *.

Of all the ministers of Lewis XVI. M. du Muy is the person whom history will mention with the greatest praise. He was a man as mild in character and manners, as he was firm and courageous in his opinions both religious

* The abbé Terray, with his brazen face, would have made an excellent director of the French republic; with this difference, however, that the talents and boldness of the abbé were confined to subaltern roguery, to the prejudice of the renters; while the directory, flushed with their triumph the day after the 18th *Fructidor*, developed at large the system of his violences, and his plans ruinous to the fortune of the French, by introducing this kind of agrarian law, which, to lighten the annual burdens of the proprietors of lands in France, invaded two thirds of the property of our rents intrusted to the probity of the state. What expedient then remained for the good genius of France, which resisted so many blows, for securing to the government the confidence of the French, after such violent attacks upon property by an authority, which we had appointed to defend them? The day of *Brumaire* alone could avenge the nation of the effects of the 18th of *Fructidor*.

May the partisans of Terray and the directors be found to have begun and finished that series of bankruptcies, devastations, and tyrannies, which I have suffered in common with my fellow-citizens from my early youth, by the order of our governments! The year that has elapsed since the day of St. Cloud, is a period which affords reason for great confidence and hope.

and political. The friendship of the late dauphin reflected upon him a reputation for virtue and honour which is not yet forgotten. He had refused an invitation to the ministry in the last year of Lewis XV.; but he accepted that of the war department under his successor. He was called, with reason, "the Montausier of the court of Lewis XVI.," because he never once departed from decency, probity, and delicacy, in his conduct, which were so rare towards the close of the preceding reign. M. du Muy answered those who were commissioned to make him an offer of a place in the ministry, in 1771, that his principles did not permit him to accept of that honour. He gave them to understand, that he would not wait on madame Dubarry, who had subjected all the ministers to the habit of frequently paying her their respects. M. du Muy was a man of great piety; he would have thought it a violation of his principles to visit the mistress of any king. A fortnight before he underwent the painful operation which occasioned his death, he gave orders for engraving the tomb-stone under which he was to be laid at the feet of the dauphin, father of Lewis XVI. The day preceding the operation, he took leave of the king, and told him he had so ordered the affairs in his office, that there would be no gap between him and his suc-

cessor. The king embraced him with tears in his eyes, and wished him a speedy recovery. M. du Muy prepared himself for death, received the sacrament, and acquainted his wife, that he had ordered the surgeon to perform the operation for the stone. It so happened, that his lady entered his apartment in the critical moment; and, from her piercing cry, Come, who was the operator, missed his aim, and the wounds inflaming, the minister died a short time after in convulsions. The marshal du Muy has left to the republic his son, the general du Muy, who has never quitted our armies since 1792, and who has commanded them with fidelity, zeal, and courage. He made the campaign of Egypt with Bonaparte.

Marshal du Muy was endowed with great wisdom and penetration. On becoming minister, he incessantly opposed the measures of Maurepas and Turgot: he said publicly, that the latter would ruin France by endeavouring to enrich it, and degrade it by his attempts to reform it. M. de Malesherbes and M. Turgot joined together to find a successor disposed to the plan of reform, and it will be seen what a dangerous man (M. de St. Germain) succeeded to the wise marshal du Muy.

Various solicitations were made to the ministry on his death. The candidates named

were MM. de Castries, de Puysegur, d'Hérouville, d'Ennery, de Vaux, de Breteuil, and du Châtelet. The whole court was in motion for the space of a fortnight. The queen desired, with much zeal, the return of the duke of Choiseul. The two ministers, Turgot and Malesherbes, now rid of the parties of Maupeou and Terray, thought of nothing but executing at their ease their plans of reform. They held secret meetings with M. de Trudaine, for the abolition of the *corvée* and of beggary, for the re-establishment of the provinces in their ancient rights, for restoring to the protestants the greater part of the privileges of which Lewis XIV. had deprived them, for the abolition of wardenships, for destroying the distinction of ranks, by confounding gradually the conditions, and in the end for procuring a convocation of the states-general. They began all these reforms by the abolition of the parliaments of M. de Maupeou, devoted to absolute power. Let us resume the history of the parliaments, and examine the use which they made of the authority granted them by the king.

CHAP. XVIII.

Conduct of the Parliament towards Lewis XVI. at the Moment of its Return, and on the Morning of its Installation.

THE fears of Monsieur and the archbishop of Paris began very soon to be realised. The exiled parliament had hardly taken their seats, the morning of the day that the king arrived at Paris, to re-establish it, than one of the members insulted the very author of their re-establishment, the count de Maurepas. This minister, on the eve of the ceremony, had been received at the opera with the applauses of the public. He came to the parliament this day with the design of continuing these enjoyments. The dean of the council, M. D'Aguesseau, no sooner perceived him in the great hall, than he told him that he had no right to enter into the assembly of the parliament. D'Aguesseau was in the middle of a circle of members. An opinion adopted unanimously did not disconcert the minister. "Be quiet," said he to M. d'Aguesseau and the magistrates, "I am not come here to sit, but to amuse myself in the par-

liament lantern:" and he mounted in reality, *incognito*, into the lantern allotted for strangers, to enjoy the work of his own creation.

The ceremony of the re-establishment was grand and imposing. The parliament registered the edicts of its installation, which superseded for the future its interior police; but on the 2d of December the assembled chambers revolted against the measures of government, and against its edicts. M. d'Ormesson, who first gave his opinion, proposed the examination of the acts of the bed of justice, and to extract from them the articles liable to remonstrance. The president de Gourgues, to give greater importance to the claims, demanded the convocation of the princes and peers; which was decreed unanimously. Thus the parliament was no sooner installed, than it endeavoured to unite itself with the grandees of the state, in opposition to the paternal authority of the king, to whom it owed its existence and return from exile. The capital, for this time, and the grandees of the state, were filled with indignation at the league of the princes, the peers, and the parliament, against the edicts of Lewis XVI. People were already heard to say, even in the party favourable to their return, that it was a bad measure to send them into exile, and that it was equally bad to recall them to

their functions. The parliament of M. de Maupeou had been agreeable to the dignitaries of the church, to generals, to the grandees of the state, to the principal men in the finances, and to all who were attached to the absolute authority of the house of Bourbon. The seditious temper of the new parliament exciting the indignation of this party, the first and most powerful in the state, the re-established parliament was obliged to have recourse to the agitation of the body of the lawyers' clerks, put into motion by the attorneys and counsellors of the *châtelet* and parliament, to oppose their farces and clamours to the extorted opinions of the great, and of every person in France who had any regard for good order. Let those who at present desire the return of the former government reflect upon the shades of the parties which I have just now merely pointed out; let them examine that variety of interests, those balancings of the ancient authority and the different bodies of the state; those flagrant contradictions between their principles and pretensions; it is a combination of all these circumstances which constituted the monarchy such as it was in 1788. Ancient France was the result of the existence and *juxta-position* of the interests then constituted and permanent in the monarchy. The public order and political stability of the old

government were the necessary effect of the wise direction given to those different parties. At the present time, 8 Brumaire, 9th year, (29 October, 1800) the revolution and our manners have annihilated those interests, those shocks, those relative positions of the orders of the state; and he who should attempt the re-establishment of that government would be a man destitute of common understanding, ignorant that it is a government which never can have place in our actual situation, after its very foundations have been destroyed.

Fortified with the body of clerks, and finding themselves in opposition to the prevailing opinion of the public, the parliament remonstrated against the edicts of the court with the tone of liberty and independence which it affected before its exile. They demanded the re-establishment of the chamber of requests which the edicts had suppressed, and, above all, the ancient forms of the interior police, which the king had abolished only for the purpose of precluding the return of the ancient insurrections of the parliaments, for preventing their shameful refusal to render justice to the people, their embarrassing resignations, and all the extravagances of an assembly in which the equality of rights was in perpetual opposition to the inequality of ranks which contested them. M. d'Or-

messon, a remarkable member among those who supported the party of the king in parliament, was not devoted to it on the present occasion. The prince of Conty took the side of the parliament. The duke of Rochefoucault, supported by the memoirs of the abbé de Mably, the same peer of France whom we have seen act a democratical part during the constituent assembly, appealed to the principles of the monarchy and the French constitution, claiming the rights of a free people, and demanding the convocation of the states-general, which neither the parliaments, nor the princes, nor the peers supply. Monsieur, brother of the king, in order to elude the remonstrances, made a motion to resolve, that there was no room for deliberation; but his proposal being rejected, and his choice lying between Rochefoucault, d'Ormesson, and the prince of Conty, he joined the party of the latter, which declared in favour of remonstrances. In a short time, the whole assembly revolted against the destination of the parliament of M. de Maupeou, which the king seemed in his edicts to preserve in a body, as if to threaten the substitution of it in the room of their assembly.

The court of Versailles, disconcerted, resolved to give ground with regard to the parliament

of Maupéou and the plenary court, if the parliament should appear to be unanimous on those points; and Monsieur, being decidedly against these measures, declared what were the intentions of the king in these respects, and undertook to promise that the plenary court should never be re-established. The assembly contented itself with a remonstrance to the king against the edicts of its installation.

But on the 21st of January, 1775, the king gave a negative kind of answer to all the demands of the assembled chambers. The prince of Conty, on his way to the parliament, received the blessings and applauses of the body of clerks, previously instructed for the purpose. Monsieur, on the contrary, and the count d'Artois, were received very coldly. The king declared, that his edicts contained nothing inimical to the established laws of the kingdom, which could not be changed. The parliament, in registering his answer, declared, that no opportunity should be neglected of remonstrating to the lord the king, on all innovations which might be thought repugnant to the constitution of the state, and protested against the bed of justice which he had established in their offices, in these terms:

"The court considering, that in the bed of justice, the publication of the laws had been made

without any previous examination, and in an illegal manner, declared, that it neither could, nor ought, nor would be understood to give an opinion contrary to the interests of the kingdom, and the service of the lord the king." The parliament, moreover, testified its acknowledgments and respect for the act of justice and goodness of the lord the king, in favour of his parliaments.

The president d'Ormesson observed, that they ought not to harass the prince with a multiplicity of remonstrances. Conty and the duke of Orleans demanded that the declarations should be repeated; Monsieur, the count d'Artois, and the archbishop of Paris, who was hooted by the populace on going out, demanded on the contrary an absolute and definitive silence. The opinion of the duke of Orleans and the prince of Conty prevailed; and on the 21st of March, 1775, the parliament in full assembly, joined by the princes and peers, gave their sanction to repeated remonstrances. They observed to the king, that the plenary court was a grand tribunal, different in its composition from any thing that had been anciently known in France under that denomination. They gave it the title of "a grand council, an extraordinary judiciary court," incapable of supplying the offices of the parliament in any thing: they announced the precautions taken against the for-

mation of chambers repugnant to the service of the king.

The king having answered the parliament, that it belonged only to him to convoke the peers of the kingdom, they appointed a committee to determine the opinion of the court on this subject. The princes of the blood joined with the prince of Conty respecting their pretensions, as distinct from those of the peers. The king in this embarrassment put an end to the dispute, by leaving the parliaments constituted as they had been under his grandfather, without taking any precautions against their violence and insurrections.

Thus the return of the parliaments was the epoch of the first triumph of those assemblies over the ancient legislative authority of the king, and the famous process between the crown and the parliaments once more recommenced.

CHAP. XIX.

The Parliament of M. de Maupeou re-constituted in grand Council—Conduct of the Court of Versailles with respect to this Parliament so devoted to its Will.—Lewis XVI. submits and withdraws the Edicts disagreeable to the re-established Parliament—He menaces and enjoins the Execution of his Will to the re-instated and subjugated Parliament, which he constitutes into a Grand Council.

WHILE the court of Versailles gave way in the presence of a refractory parliament extolled by the body of the clerks, the populace and clerks insulted the parliament of M. de Maupeou in the presence even of the partisans of the absolute authority of a prince, a silent spectator of these transactions. The hootings of the people who pursued the parliament of M. de Maupeou in its way to the Louvre, there to sit as a grand council, were less grievous than the contempt which Lewis XVI. was preparing for it at Versailles.

This grand council, mortified at beholding itself the instrument of the caprices of the court, by its first metamorphosis from a grand council into a parliament, by its second metamorphosis from a parliament into a grand coun-

cil, and by its actual destiny, which obliged it to serve in France as a touch-stone for another revolution, had the resolution to send to the king a deputation of the members, to represent the impossibility of existing as an authority purely comminatory against the eventual obstinacy of parliaments. Such was the substance of the instructions given to them by the president. This personage ought to have cited the ancient animosity of parliaments as contrary and dangerous to the moral existence of the grand council. The king, harassed with remonstrances, refused to receive the president who brought the message from the assembly, and it was not till after repeated solicitations by madame Adélaide and madame de Marsan, who had been intrusted with the charge of the king in his infancy, that Lewis XVI. could be persuaded to give an audience to the president. "I have reason to be surprised," said the prince to him, "that, after having notified to you my will, so clearly manifested in my bed of justice, your proceedings have been in every thing directly contrary to it. I will be obeyed, and until you execute punctually the edict which concerns you, I cannot examine your demands." The king desired that they would "merit" his protection by their obedience, and it was their obedience itself which had brought them into insignificance

and contempt. On the 4th of December 1774, the grand council assembled to receive the answer of the king. This body was naturally obsequious; they declared that, relying on the goodness of the king, they complied with his commands, and would proceed to the regulation of their sittings.

Dejection and shame overspread the face of the vanquished jesuitical party on this occasion: this was the second defeat. Had the duke of Choiseul proscribed it in 1762, and excited the parliaments against it; had the proscriptions of these bodies given it time to breathe, their resurrection would have reduced it again to nothing, and there was a probability that it would have remained so for ever. The archbishop of Paris, who, under the reign of the late king, had manifested his discontent against the court by refusing the sacraments to the party which professed religious opinions contrary to his own, made now an attempt to renew his objections. An ex-jesuit, the abbé Madier, curate of St. Benoit, was ordered to refuse the sacraments to the parliamentary jansenists; the king, on exiling this curate, sent for the archbishop of Paris, and said to him: "Your turbulence formerly occasioned your being punished by order of my grandfather; I shall not send you into exile, as he did; but if your conduct should prove such

as to incur the rigour of justice, I shall not stop the course of it."

M. de Beaumont refused no longer the sacraments of the church to the parliamentary jansenists, and the court recalled the abbé Madier from his exile, a persecution which obtained him the favour and confidence of the king's aunts, whose party he had embraced, and he was appointed their confessor. I was intimately acquainted with the abbé Madier, who was my countryman. He was graceful both in his deportment and conversation; he had a delicate mind, and was truly attached to his party, of which he has told me many curious anecdotes. He departed from his character when he publicly declared himself against the new parliament. This was the last scene of the jesuitical and jansenist factions before the revolution, after having many years agitated France during the preceding reign.

It was in these circumstances that the party of the archbishop and d'Aiguillon distributed at court a manuscript memoir against M. de Maurepas. I shall proceed to take notice of the most remarkable observations contained in it.

"It is to you, count, that I address the reproaches which every good Frenchman has a right to throw out against you; but I let you

know previously, that I am neither of a fickle nor frivolous character, and that I leave to you the talent of treating the most serious affairs with buffoonery.

"The revolution you effect in the parliaments, creates a division in the opinions of the public concerning you. Some think that you have acquired great glory, and others proportionable disgrace. The former regard you as the sage Mentor of the king; the latter say, that after having disparaged Lewis XV. by your ballads, you betray the present king by your counsels. Guess in which class I am. I say nothing of the intrigue which brought you back to court; my respect for a great princess, for madame Adélaide, who regrets extremely her having contributed to it, permits me not to mention the secret practices to which you have had recourse, nor how you have duped M. d'Aiguillon, who flattered himself with the hope of deriving great advantages from your elevation.

"Before letting the king know of the recall of the parliaments, which you have secretly resolved upon, you render suspicious in his eyes every thing that could tend to traverse that measure. You blackened the ministers then in place; you threw out suspicions even against the royal family; you did not even spare the

queen. The infamous expedients which you employed to embroil her with the king, and which you throw upon the chancellor Maupeou, will one day be revealed to the public*.

" After having isolated the king, after subjecting him exclusively to yourself, you did not judge it proper to propose to him immediately the recall of the parliaments, but you concerted a grand memorial with the duke of Orleans, which that prince presented to the king, and which gave you an opportunity of speaking to his majesty on the subject of it. Your first attempts were confined to the inspiring him with mistrust and suspicions concerning the work of his grandfather. You advised, that, before taking any part, he should be perfectly informed of the affair.

" When you had brought the king to this point, you called for memorial after memorial. Turgot and Elie de Beaumont composed them; you deluged the royal cabinet with their writings. The king proposed to you to discuss the affair in his council: you had already blackened many members of it; you dissuaded him from that idea. What did you mean by the abolition of the new parliament? to destroy through jea-

* The author speaks of the pamphlet entitled *Laurore*, which accused the queen of prostituting herself to the duke of Chartres.

lousy the work of another person, to satisfy your own vanity, to soothe your resentment against the late king, whom you never pardoned for chastising you so justly, against whom you maintained the most indecent purposes, and wished to disgrace his memory. Your calumnies against his ministers have produced their effect. They are dismissed. Whom will you employ to execute your plans?

"You take M. de Miroménil, your kinsman, a petty being, without genius, without manners, without fortune, immersed in debt, subsisting by private charity, and known only by his seditious disposition. You could not propose to the king the dismissing of M. du Muy and M. de Vergennes till he came to name his ministers; and their inflexible probity alarming you, you concerted with M. de Sartines, M. Turgot, and M. Miroménil, a committee formed by you for conducting the most important business of the monarchy. You agree with them about keeping it an inviolable secret. But when you are seen at the feet of the king, whose mind is so repugnant to vice, you, the depositories of his authority, creeping into the mazes of intrigue before you made known your designs, it may justly be concluded that your intentions are not good.

"People even the most prejudiced cannot deny, that the revolution of 1771 was advan-

tageous to the king, in many respects. Many provinces recovered the right of having within themselves one supreme court of judicature. The venality which degraded the laws and ministers was suppressed in these tribunals; the fees, that scourge, ruinous even to him who gains his cause, were there abolished; peace was restored in the state. The revolution of which you are the author destroys all these advantages, and substitutes in their room the ancient abuses. It is useful only to the persons whom you re-establish in their functions; and this good is counterbalanced by the evil which you do those whom you displace. Thus the private good is of no avail, while the general evil to the nation is certain.

" With regard to the interests of the king, the point is to know, whether his authority be more or less strengthened? and this question is no longer a problem. You conceal carefully from the king all that passes; but can you conceal from yourself with what contempt the authority is every where treated? You see the conduct of your new parliament: the decree of the 30th of December 1774, enacted by the princes, the peers, and the members of the parliament, breaks down all the barriers which you had erected by the bed of justice, which recalls the parliaments, and lays down principles which you

wished to establish. The answer which you have dictated to the king destroys none of these principles; and besides, by another decree of a more recent date, the parliament declares that it persists in it. To say that all this is merely protests of form, is to impose upon the youth of the king. Sport with the public as you please; it is your manner; but do not sport with your master, your king, your benefactor. Be ingenuous for once in your life, and own, that, in the actual state of things, the king and the parliament remain each in their place, that is to say, with arms in their hands, as in 1770, and that they are ready to fight when an occasion shall present itself. Be sincere with regard to the momentary silence of the parliaments of Rouen, Aix, and of Rennes. Admit that they wait for the establishment of the others to adopt the anarchical principles of the parliament of the capital. You have then put the royal authority again into the fetters in which it was in 1770. You have therefore neither intended nor performed any good to the kingdom; you have done nothing in favour of the royal authority; you have brought Lewis XVI. to the precipice, and there you leave him. If you really meant to preserve his authority, you are the most unreasonable of men; and if you have presented him with the projects of the re-orga-

nisation of the new parliament, with the design of laying a snare and drawing him to the point you proposed, you are the most wicked of men. You are accused of saying, in your committees, that it is necessary to bridle the king, who is not steady in his character. People charge the duchess of Grammont with repeating, that it is necessary that the Bourbons restore to the great the benefits of which they have plundered them.

" What I observe in this juncture is, that you degrade the power of the crown, and its supporters; that your favours are lavished on men of republican principles; and that, to be attached to the king, is with you a sufficient reason for incurring your most desperate revenge. I wish you no ill; my desire is, that they may let you go to die in peace at Pontchartrain, near your carp; you will there make a song on your disgrace, and you will be consoled."

M. de Maurepas answered this letter by a dozen *lettres-de-cachet*, which fell upon unfortunate authors who were incapable of writing it.

CHAP. XX.

Sequel of the Portrait of M. de Maurepas—Continuation of the Struggle begun in 1775, between the Minister and the Friends to the absolute Authority of the King—Unfavourable Remarks spread at Court concerning him—Second Manuscript Letter against his Measures, and against the first Measures of Turgot—His secret Connexions with the Parliaments—His Manner of governing the young King.—It is told M. de Maurepas, in a Manuscript Pamphlet, that his Conduct leads the State to a Republic.—Copy of this Pamphlet, given by Marshal Richelieu to the Author of these Memoirs.

AMIDST these transactions, there were men of penetration, who observed the progress of events, and informed the government of faults which were paving the way to its ruin. The first letter, handed about in manuscript by a devotee party, was soon after followed by a second, which came from the same source. I had it from marshal Richelieu, who, in delivering it me in his library, added, "Here is that famous prophecy, to the accomplishment of which every thing I see seems to direct its course, unless the fortune of the state rescue it from its dangers, unless a stop be put to the measures which the public applauds, and which are reprobated by all the principles of a well-

established monarchy." In saying these words, he gave me the following piece, the original of which I shall place in the hands of the booksellers who are proprietors of my work, with the character of authenticity which it bears.

" I understand, my lord, that my former letter has offended you, and that on reading it you fell into a passion, like a child. This mark of weakness, which I did not expect, suspends the design I had of sending you the complete history of your follies, your intrigues, and treasons, since your entrance into the ministry, and your recall to court; but my love for the government of my country, and my zeal for the king, force me again to present you with some melancholy truths *.

" In a committee of which you were the soul, you decided two great and most important questions, one concerning the subsistence of the people, the other, the royal authority. The part which you took in the former has occasioned desolation, famine, and death, in many provinces. The riots and insurrections in those parts afford proof of the utmost distress and despair.

" Your decision on the second is equally fatal to the royal authority. I shall undertake to

* See the first letter of the same author, in chap. XIX. of this volume.

demonstrate to you clearly, that it has lost more since the month of November last (1774), than from the reign of Lewis XIV. to the year 1770. I had the courage to tell you, and to prove, that, after having dishonoured Lewis XV. by your songs, you have betrayed Lewis XVI. by your counsels. In vain will you exclaim against this assertion; the more you deny it, the more will you give me opportunity of confirming it by new proofs.

"Many persons have been surprised to see the parliament make such rapid progress, and yet testify to the king its acknowledgments only by forming new pretensions. For my part, I sincerely believe, that you join in their measures, and have promised to abandon the royal authority. You have executed that dreadful plot relatively to the principles advanced in the remonstrances of the parliament, and you continue to prosecute it in the affair of the duke of Richelieu.

"The parliament passed a decree for convoking the peers: the king told the first president, that the prerogative belonged to him to convoke the peers of his kingdom; and notwithstanding this answer of the king, the peers were convoked next day in virtue of the decree: though, according to all principles and all precedents, the parliament cannot in any case

convoke the peers, you allow the decree to be carried into execution, that is, you pretend to preserve to the king the shadow of a right, and abandon to the parliament the reality. The king may not know the circumstances of this perfidious conduct; but do not flatter yourself with the hope of concealing them from others. It is known that M. Hue, by your order, concerts with the leaders of the parliament, that they frame together the measures of that body and the answers of the king; in a word, that they unite in every expedient of gradually divesting the monarch of his prerogatives, and rendering him a cypher. They communicate to you the results, you approve them, and every thing proceeds according to your plan: I dare you to deny these facts. In this manner you abandon on every occasion the young prince, who has had the misfortune of honouring you with his confidence.

"You make a sport of deceiving him in every thing. You have the impudence to tell him, that every thing goes on well, and that the petty difficulties which the revolution occasions will vanish of themselves. How can you, without blushing, debase yourself by such a lie? You know, that the whole kingdom is in a flame; that the administration of justice is every where almost totally suspended; that in the parliaments,

where you have endeavoured to join the English with the French, you have put a poniard into the hands of one half of the assembly against the other; that their minds are reciprocally irritated, in a manner that precludes all reconciliation, and that the spirit of civil war exists in every bosom. With what face dare you, after all this, assure the king that every thing goes on well? Have I not reason to say that you betray him?

"But what discovers most clearly your project, is your prosecution of all those who were faithful to the king in 1771. The kingdom is covered with those unfortunate victims of obedience; their complaints reach you only to experience a refusal, or a jest that is still more mortifying. You, by laughing scornfully, and M. H. by lifting up his eyes to heaven, oppress them equally in a manner the most intolerable. A fierce and sanguinary tyranny would less irritate the heart, than that cold and scornful air with which you sacrifice these honest citizens.

"Peruse the history of England; you will see the parliament at war with the king a long time; the opposition proves victorious in the end. Base ministers persuade the monarch to abandon the defenders of his authority. They are ruined. The parliament upon this becomes more audacious. The king desires to resume

his rights; but he no longer finds any hands to serve him, and *the throne falls under the blows of republican licentiousness.*

" I know not whether things will proceed to that terrible extremity; but your conduct leads directly towards it, and you are seconded most excellently by M. Hue*. Affecting in the king's presence mildness, justice, and even religion, resuming out of its natural character, deceitful, false, and vindictive, he is of all the subaltern tyrants the most vile and most fanatical: as for the rest, he must gain his money. It is not for his equity that from being a bankrupt you have made him keeper of the seals, and that he has passed from the lowest state of misery to the most ostentatious opulence. I know not whether the ex-jesuit, Radonvilliers, assists you so much in besetting and deceiving the king.

" I should be very desirous of proposing to you a political axiom for your meditation. ' The

* This poor M. Hue had been duly cautioned. He did not fail to receive strong remonstrances which indicated the results of the measures of administration; but of what importance are the counsels of wise men, to those who are led astray and intoxicated with their power! Such honest freedom fills them with indignation; they break forth into open violence; they punish the authors of such truths, and often their zeal in serving them. M. de Maurepas threw into the Bastille those who presumed to make observations on the conduct of government: the revolutionists have done worse still, they have killed them.

monarchical government *becomes republican*, when the trustees of the royal authority abuse their deposit, to make themselves be obeyed in the name of the laws, while they themselves disobey the legislature;' but I perceive that this grave subject is above your weak capacity, and too much contrary to your designs of degrading the king. Come, my lord, we are now cheek-by-jowl; let us speak calmly and loyally. I agree sincerely that you are the most artful courtier, and the most dextrous man in the world in conducting intrigues; that you possess in the highest degree the art both of serving and of doing hurt. Do you likewise confess that you know nothing, that your knowledge extends no farther than the frivolous ceremonials of the court, and that it is much easier to jest and sing than to conduct the government of empires."

In this manner spoke the party of Richelieu, united with the archbishop of Paris, in the month of January 1776. It was in the court itself, that, from the beginning of his reign, the young king discovered that his destinies, his ministers, and their measures, were conducting him to the scaffold. A regard for the constituents, the fear of appearing to calumniate their intentions, the desire of living under a tranquil

government, without disturbing it by new disquietudes, or communicating to the public the apprehensions of marshal de Richelieu, prevented me, in the year 1790, from publishing this piece, which was to conclude the memoirs of marshal de Richelieu.

Thus are we now arrived at the second year of the reign of the king; and at this epoch the events destructive of the monarchy increase in number. The prophecy of the misfortunes of Lewis XVI. was already announced with solemnity or officially; 1st, by the party of courtiers most attached to the preservation of the monarchy; 2dly, by the assembly of the clergy of France, who bear witness to their fears, their views, and their prophecies, in the remonstrances of 1770. The two first orders of the state then had pointed out, marked, and announced, the bloody catastrophes of 1792, and twenty-two years before-hand.

REIGN OF LEWIS XVI.

THIRD EPOCH:

OR

The three Administrations of Turgot, Malesherbes, and St. Germain.

" There are certain evils in a state which ought to be tolerated, because they prevent greater evils. There are other evils far less pernicious than a law more just or more reasonable. There is a sort of evils which may be corrected by a change or innovation, which is also evil, and one of a very dangerous nature. There are other evils deeply concealed under shame and secrecy; they cannot admit of being searched or stirred without exhaling poison and infamy: wise men are in doubt, whether it be better to know these evils, or to remain ignorant of them. A great evil is sometimes tolerated in a state, because it prevents inconveniences which admit of no remedy. Some other evils subvert states, and raise new governments on their ruins."

LA BRUYERE, *Characters*, chap. x.

CHAP. XXI.

Transition of the ancient Polity of France to a Polity directly opposite.—General Views respecting the peaceful and reforming Administrations.—M. Turgot is the first Minister who developes in the Government the System of improving the Human Mind and Political Institutions.—Of the Ministers who have governed France such as it was constituted, *and of the Ministers who wished to govern it* such as it ought to be constituted.—*M. Turgot begins, and Mr. Necker continues, the System of Perfectibility.*

THE second epoch of the king's reign exhibits to us the royal authority giving a helping hand to opposition, raising it up from its degradation, exile, and annihilation, to introduce it again into parliament.

The third epoch exhibits the same authority, calling into the very bosom of government the virtue which had been oppressed under the reign of the late king.

But, in the first measure, the opposition triumphs under Lewis XVI. over the military authority of the king. In the second measure, on the contrary, the authority seems aware of making rapid advances to a new political state of things; and it destroys its own work by the

disgrace or dismission of Messrs. Turgot, Malesherbes, and St. Germain.

A crowd of insignificant ministers had governed France during the reign of Lewis XV. Five or six personages had been distinguished in the space of sixty years, in the government, by the novelty of their principles, and the boldness of their measures.

One alone had rendered himself celebrated for the moderation of his views and measures. This was cardinal Fleury, who was minister almost thirty years, and whose maxims were, "to let France go quite alone, according to the expression of Benedict XIV.; to leave her, without constraint, to her national genius, and only to take care that she should make no alteration in it." Under this cardinal, France was powerful abroad, and enjoyed internal tranquillity; while under bold and enterprising ministers she felt all the commotions of which they were the authors and abettors.

M. Turgot is the only minister who, under Lewis XVI., had the courage to deviate from the steps of cardinal Fleury. This minister had conceived a plan for "governing France, not as she was, but as he conceived she ought to be." This plan became the scourge of the country. Like men of turbulent dispositions and inclined to innovations, he knew not the wise

maxim " of living with men, as nature has constituted them;" he was desirous of rendering the French " such as he conceived them, and as he wished them to be." He found virtue discontented, timid, often persecuted, and sheltered in the opposition; he listened to her complaints, he attempted to bring her back into the government; but knew neither how to calculate or appreciate the force of the virtue which he wished to honour, nor that of the abuse which he wished to destroy. Vice and virtue were, since the civilisation of the monarchy, two great irreconcileable enemies, and nobody foresaw that from the shock of their interests would result the ruin of the state.

At the side of Turgot, we shall find the virtuous Malesherbes, who as yet maintained the doctrine of perfectibility; but he soon discovered that ancient France, become old and corrupted by the manners of the latter reigns, was still more powerful than the France which he wished to reform. He retired without a struggle, from a court which he believed to be incapable of concurring with him in a plan of reformation.

Mr. Necker succeeding both these philosophers, and resuming at court the system of perfectibility, attempted a number of reforming experiments upon a generation of men, whom he also wished to render more just

and more perfect. The ideal excellence in government, in finance, and in legislation, agitating the imagination of all these illustrious men, they never could compare with wisdom, and, above all, with any foresight, the good which they wished to procure to France, with the evil which they really effected. The results of their speculation ought to influence a faithful historian with regard to the judgment he wishes to form of those new theories. One entire generation, seduced by the charms of their promises, laboured with our reformers for the establishment of virtue in government, and the degradation of vice.

The author of these Memoirs, partaking in the complaints of his contemporaries, against the abuses of the times, contributed to proscribe them in the first part of this work, published in 1790, under the title of *Memoirs of Marshal de Richelieu*; but the following generation, which we see take the lead, eleven years after, and particularly in the present circumstances, refuses to acknowledge, in the measures of the preceding generation, the necessity of the antique and ideal excellence of the golden age, which that generation wished to establish in our political institutions; and refusing to acknowledge, that their predecessors had discovered even the road which leads to

perfection, the historian, embarrassed between the two opposite systems, ought to proceed with caution in forming an opinion on the subject. It is his duty to collect the facts, the plans of each epoch, and content himself sometimes with leaving to posterity the right of calling to its tribunal these two contending generations, which we have seen pass, or are now going down the stream of time. At present, moreover, there begin to arise debates in the republic of letters, between the disciples and the enemies of the reformers of the polity of France. Learned men have resumed the question of perfectibility, after the ravages it is known to have produced in the administration. Let us then accumulate the materials necessary for deciding on the opposite opinions of these two generations.

CHAP. XXII.

Anecdotes of the Youth of M. Turgot; the Character which he began to develope from his early Years—He studies in the Sorbonne—He is there elected Prior—Goes to the Seminary at St. Sulpice—His Opinions concerning the Influence of Religion on the Progress of Civilisation—Sketch of his political and religious Opinions at that Time.

M. TURGOT was forty-seven years of age when he was chosen minister; he bore a name which his father had rendered respectable in the magistracy of the capital; and from his infancy he gave presages of what he would one day become. He bought books for poor scholars, to furnish them with the means of instruction: he was modest, plain, grave, thoughtful, and timid. Nature had given him qualities so opposite to the character of the most fashionable youth of his time, that from his tender years he was at variance with the opinions of the age. Had nature likewise endowed him with suppleness and complaisance in the same degree with his other qualities, he would not only have consummated the revolution which he afterwards

conceived, for eradicating the abuses of administration, but would have accomplished it in triumph over every opposition.

Philosophy, which paved the way at a distance for great subversions, raised its head in France, towards the middle of the eighteenth century, in opposition to the church. It was in this situation that M. Turgot was destined by his parents to the ecclesiastical state. He studied in the seminary of St. Sulpice, and was prior of the Sorbonne; he pursued his studies "with distinction and great piety," says the author of the Memoirs of M. Turgot, which I have from the marquis of Turgot, his brother. He was appointed that year to deliver an academical discourse, in which he maintained with much eloquence the "advantage which the people had derived from the christian religion." This anecdote is a fact which deserves to be recorded in history, because Turgot became afterwards an enemy to a worship which he perpetually traduced "as the work of useless superstition." In his discourse, the abbé Turgot cites the writings and language of the Romans, the laws, the morals, the history of the first people of the world, to whom our ancestors immediately succeeded in the Gauls, and the knowledge and traditions of whom are the sole work of the christian religion. "The scholastic phi-

losophy," says the abbé Turgot, "preserved Europe from the profound ignorance to which the barbarians of the north, the destroyers of the Roman empire, would have devoted us. There was not a priest, who, after studying a treatise on logic, a treatise on morals, and a treatise on metaphysics, did not become in France a sort of magistrate, a guardian of the doctrine of Aristotle and Plato, which was accommodated to christian morality. The subtilty of scholastic metaphysics taught men a precision of ideas, and the analytical method, unknown to the ancients; which has contributed since to the progress of true philosophy. The disputes with the heterodox sects quickened the human mind, and excited emulation. Christian morality became universal, and formed a bond, which united together all nations by the analogy of manners and opinions.

"The morality of the pagans was fitted only to form citizens of a particular nation, or philosophers distinguished by the pre-eminence of their maxims, superior to those of their contemporaries. Christian morality, on the contrary, had for its basis obligatory maxims and duties, and created in man a new man. It taught the equality of rights; it laboured for the abolition of slavery, both domestic and that of the glebe. It contributed, by the mildness of its maxims,

to soften the restless and turbulent people of antiquity."—Such were the first opinions of the abbé Turgot relative to the effects of the christian religion on the minds of the moderns.

CHAP. XXIII.

The first philosophical Ideas of M. Turgot.—System of the Perfectibility of the Human Species, of which he is the first Author—He applies its Maxims to the Affairs of State—He makes France acquainted with the Erse Poems of Ossian.

IN a second work, not yet published, M. Turgot, at the age of twenty-three, established a doctrine which we now see espoused by the most ingenious men in the French republic, who forget to cite the author of it. M. Turgot entertained the idea, that the human mind and heart improved daily; and he explained his doctrine in a work entitled, *Sketch of the Progress of the Human Mind, from the earliest State of almost savage Man, to the present Time; and of the Progress to be expected in future.* He mentions the people of Asia as the parents of the sciences. He thinks, that the perfection of the arts is limited by nature, and the progress of the sciences without bounds. He shows, that memorable discoveries were made in the mechanic arts, even during the ages of ignorance, because artisans are con-

stantly employed at work, and by that means confirm their experiments. He maintains, that the sciences owe their advancement to the increasing perfectibility of the human mind; a perfectibility which M. Turgot believes to be indefinitive, and upon which he erected a system which he never afterwards renounced, but on which he founded the principles both of philosophy and his administration. In that work he sees, he predicts, what we have since effected, the separation of the English colonies from the mother-country. He foretells, that this event would extend the freedom of commerce, and would cause the rights of men, united in political associations, to be respected. This discourse was a presage of the career which M. Turgot proposed to himself in life. M. de Condorcet has developed this system, in a work published by the national convention after the 10th of Thermidor.

The virtuous Turgot did not foresee the consequences of the system of perfectibility applied to the affairs of state in a monarchy, abounding with what he called abuses and vices. The principle of natural right was his first guide when he was called into the ministry. It was in this situation, that, amidst the different claims of the natural rights of the people, and the positive right established in France, he al-

ways preferred the natural rights to the rights of the institution. It was a great step towards the doctrine of *the declaration of the rights of man.* It was likewise in this circumstance that M. de St. Priest, the father, intendant of Languedoc, said to me, "that though this minister introduced into his official reports sublime preambles in the spirit of Puffendorf or Grotius, his conclusions were nevertheless unjust. In a flourishing monarchy, and where every thing is quiet, the disobedience of a magistrate to positive laws, in favour of a more sacred right, is a crime; and of all the abuses in a great state, the greatest is that of attempting to reform them." This was the general opinion of the intendants with regard to M. Turgot and his theory. But such was the nature of M. Turgot's system on perfectibility, and such his zeal for reform, that, disdaining to act the passive part of the generality of the intendants, "almost all, men of mere routine," said he, he struck out of the known and common roads, to pursue the most direct line, the most rigid rule of uprightness. Hence his ministerial principles respecting commerce, agriculture, wardenships, manufactures, and the forms of the administration of the state, which he wished to adopt towards the end of the year 1776; and which, as people will be convinced, must at that period have begun and

established the revolution effected in France in 1789.

M. Turgot had carried with him the principle of perfectibility into his intendancy of Limoges, to which he was called in 1761. His system, which had till then been merely speculative, was turned into a zeal and a kind of passion, hitherto without a name; and which I shall call the *love of the most perfect*, or *of ideal excellence*, borrowing this term from the artists.

An intendant of a province in ancient France, was a man under government, charged with executing in detail the commands of the sovereign. He decided provisionally concerning many affairs, and determined controversies relative to commerce and the finances; but in a manner purely official, and subject to an appeal to the privy-council. He imposed taxes; he took cognisance of opinions dangerous to the public tranquillity; he was *the eye of the state* in the provincial administrations, placed at the side of the military commandant; which two authorities, the civil and the military, were checks upon each other. From the combination of this balance of powers resulted the internal quiet and prosperity of France, which had continued inviolate for ages; but not with-

out abuses resulting from the nature of things, and chiefly from the secret of their correspondence with government, which too often deprived both the towns and provinces of the natural and positive right of being superintended by the sovereign administrator of the state.

It is to M. Turgot that we are indebted for our acquaintance with Erse poetry. He had been struck with the beautiful and original simplicity of the poems of Ossian, which Macpherson had communicated to the republic of letters. M. Turgot translated passages of them in the foreign journal and the literary varieties, with reflexions on the poetry of an uncultivated people. Turgot there showed himself a profound philosopher. He translated from the German the *Messiah* of Klopstock, and the *Death of Abel.* He translated from the Italian the *Pastor Fido*; from the Greek, the *Iliad*; from the Hebrew, the *Canticles*; and from the Latin, detached pieces from the principal literary works of the Romans.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ministry of M. Turgot—Conditions upon which he accepts his Place—His Memoir to Lewis XVI.—His Love of the People—Conformity of his popular Principles with those of the King—Memoir of the Chevalier Turgot, transmitted to the Author of these Memoirs, upon the State of the Receipt and Expenditure, on the Accession of M. Turgot to the Ministry; upon the Freedom of Commerce in Corn; and upon the Writings of Mr. Necker against M. Turgot.

M. TURGOT would not accept the administration of the finances but upon the following conditions: that he should introduce a system of economy, and be supported by the king; that there should be no bankruptcies; that no new taxes should be imposed, nor any money be borrowed by the state. He founded these conditions on the following reasons: if new taxes be imposed, the king cannot but feel uneasiness of mind, for the people are already miserably burdened. If loans be contracted, they produce plenty for a little time, but they diminish the fixed revenue; they lay incumbrances upon succeeding generations; they occasion the necessity of new loans, multi-

plied indefinitely to relieve the public exigence, and terminate in inevitable bankruptcy.

To obviate inconvenience, M. Turgot moved that the expenditure should be kept within the bounds of the revenue, and in such a manner, that the state should save annually twenty millions, to rid itself of old debts; this measure he thought absolutely necessary for the safety of the state. We now see the effects of the opposite doctrine of loans, and the wisdom of the first ideas of M. Turgot.

To accomplish the plan of the diminution of the expenditure, M. Turgot proposed, that the minister of the finances, and the other ministers, should assemble in the presence of the king, to determine the state of the expenditure, and ascertain the balance with the receipts.

" With respect to royal benefactions, it is necessary," said Turgot to the king, " that you arm your bounty against your bounty, and consider whence the money which you can distribute among your courtiers proceeds; that you compare the misery of the people, from whom it is extorted by rigorous measures, with the situation of the persons who have a claim to your liberality.

" As long as France shall have recourse to temporary expedients for securing the public service, your majesty will be in a state of de-

pendence on financiers, who will be able, by the manœuvres of office, to defeat the most important measures. The government will never be tranquil, because the discontents and inquietudes of the people are always the means made use of, by the intriguing and disaffected, to excite public commotions. On economy, therefore, depend the prosperity of your reign, tranquillity at home, respect abroad, the happiness of the nation, and your own.

" I enter upon my office in a difficult conjuncture through the inquietudes on the subject of provisions, increased by the fermentation of restless tempers, and, for some years past, by the variation of the principles of ministers, by some imprudent measures, and, above all, by a harvest which appears to have been scanty. On this subject, as on many others, I do not desire that your majesty should adopt my principles without their being well examined, either by yourself, or by faithful persons in your presence; but when the justice and necessity of what I have proposed shall fully appear, I must intreat that your majesty will support their execution with firmness, without paying any attention to the clamours which it is impossible to avoid in this case, whatever conduct be adopted. These are the points which your majesty has been pleased to permit me to re-

call to your mind. Your majesty will not forget that, in accepting the place of controller-general, I have felt that your majesty confided to me the happiness of your people, and the care of rendering both your person and authority beloved. I was sensible of the danger to which I exposed myself; I foresaw that I should have to combat alone against abuses of every kind, against the multiplicity of prejudices that oppose themselves to every reform, and which are so powerful a mean in the hands of those who are interested in supporting public disturbances; I shall have to struggle against the natural goodness and generosity of your majesty, and of persons most dear to your heart. I shall be feared and hated by the greater part of the court. I shall be held up as austere, for representing to your majesty, that you ought not to enrich even those whom you love most, at the expense of the subsistence of your people. This very people, to whom I shall have sacrificed myself, are so liable to be deceived, that I shall perhaps incur their hatred on account of the very measures which I shall employ for defending them from vexations. I shall be calumniated, and perhaps with so much speciousness as to deprive me of the confidence of your majesty, and even of your esteem. My reputation for integrity, and the public appro-

bation of my character, which have determined your choice in my favour, are dearer to me than life; and I run the risk of destroying them, while in my own judgment I deserve not even the smallest reproach. I venture thus to repeat what your majesty has already been pleased to listen to and approve. The affecting kindness with which your majesty condescended to press my hand between your own, as if to receive the deduction of myself to your service, will never be effaced from my memory; it will support my courage, it will inseparably unite my own happiness to the interests, the glory, and happiness of your majesty."

Such was the language used by M. Turgot to Lewis XVI., the day after he was appointed minister. His letter is dated the 24th of August, 1774, at Compiegne. M. Turgot, affected with the popularity of the king, made it incessantly his study to preserve in him the sentiments of patriotism; he said, that the love of the king for the people and for justice facilitated all his measures. The king, on his part, disavowed not his popular sentiments. "I know in France," said he, "but two men who sincerely love the people, M. Turgot and myself."

The abbé Terray, on his dismission from the ministry, had left the department of finance in great disorder. M. Turgot drew up a metho-

dical statement of the receipts and expences for the year 1775; by which it appeared, that the expenditure exceeded the receipts by the sum of twenty-two millions, and that there was more than twenty-eight millions of anticipations, besides a large debt demandable, in arrears. England had not yet excited the interior against our *deficit*. M. Turgot supplied the defect, leaving, on his retirement from office, the expenditure to balance the receipts.

The most conspicuous measure of M. Turgot was the re-establishment of the liberty of the internal commerce of grain, from province to province. "This beneficial measure was opposed by very powerful private interests," said the chevalier Turgot to me, in a memoir which I received from him concerning his brother: "the measure pleased the nation, with the exception of Mr. Necker, who combated the principle of it with animosity, and in a circumstance delicate and dangerous to the authority and credit of the minister in office. My brother spoke only of relative freedom in the interior, where he wished to establish a balance between the good and bad local harvests, between the provinces rich in corn, and those which were fertile in other productions. My brother left the exportation as much prohibited as it had been by the abbé Terray. The decree of the 13th of

September 1774, however, was a signal to Mr. Necker and his friends for attributing to my brother opinions which are not in the decree. It was with Mr. Necker and his friends as with Alexander, who wept from vexation to see his father anticipate conquests which he wished to have made himself; for Mr. Necker entertained the same opinions; but it was worse in Mr. Necker, it was a criminal offence against the state and against justice, since he attacked plans which were calculated to regenerate France and the most valuable of her departments, that of commerce and the finance. Mr. Necker maintained in his work, which he wrote in opposition to the administration of my brother, that the liberty of exporting grain was not necessary to the progress of agriculture in France, as if my brother had affirmed it to be requisite for our agricultural prosperity. Mr. Necker admitted even the freedom of exportation to be capable of injuring agriculture, as if there had been an opposite opinion for him to discredit.

"It was precisely in this situation that the famous riot upon the subject of corn took place. My brother found himself directly attacked by the writings of Mr. Necker, and by the insurrections of the plunderers. As you are writing the history of these transactions, I furnish you

with the real facts, on the truth and accuracy of which you may depend *."

* The opinion of chevalier Turgot respecting the insurrection, will be found after the chapter relative to those troubles.

CHAP. XXV.

Revolt in Consequence of a Scarcity of Corn: it breaks out the same Day in many Provinces, at Versailles, and at Paris.—The Parliament desires to take Cognisance of it; which is opposed by the Court.—Developement of the Military Power.—Portrait of the Parisians in this Circumstance, exhibited by their Conduct.—Character of the King.—The Gibbet of forty Feet.—Amnesty.—Condorcet on this Riot—The Causes of it problematical, and yet England appeared to be concerned in it.

POSTERITY will inquire into the causes of the riot respecting corn, though perhaps the real origin of it will remain for ever in obscurity. What seems to me most probable, after the maturest reflexion, is, that the government authorising the free commerce of grain from the 17th September 1774, the monopolists, in opposition to this measure, and the old contractors for supplying the government with necessaries, favoured the commotions. These parties on the one hand, and the friends to a free commerce on the other, were each animated with an attention to their respective interests, and the fermentation broke forth in the month of May.

This riot had been in some measure announced by the commotions at Dijon, of the 20th of April,

on the same account. In Burgundy the peasants pulled down a mill belonging to a monopoliser. They next attacked the house of a counsellor of Maupeou's parliament, where they destroyed all the furniture. Latour-du-Pin, commandant of the town, provoked the multitude still more, by telling them to "go and browse the grass, which was then beginning to spring up." Had it not been for the bishop, who harangued the insurgents, the tumult would have become outrageous at Dijon, where it was expected every moment that the fury of the populace would be directed against the members in general of Maupeou's parliament.

Pontoise appeared to be the source and centre of the commotion. On the 1st of May the riot broke out at that place, and on the 2d it manifested itself at Versailles. The king made his appearance on the balcony, spoke to the people, and could not be heard. The lieutenant of the provostship of Versailles spied the tumult, and instantly the prince de Beauvau, captain of the guards, the prince de Poix, governor of Versailles, and the body-guards, all mount their horses and hold a council. "Must the king go to Chambord?" said they. "Shall we place a guard at the grate?" The advice of the king took effect, and, by his order, they proclaimed bread to be sold at two-pence the loaf. The

mob immediately dispersed, and destroyed no more flour.

The plunderers had boasted that they would come to Paris; and though care had been taken to put the watch, the French guards, the Swiss guards, the fusileers, and other divisions of the king's household, in a state of service, they actually entered by different gates at the same hour, plundering the bakers without exception. Observing, however, a shop where the master had prudently put up a bill, *this shop to be let immediately*, the insurgents passed on without attacking it.

The king, from humanity, had given orders not to fire upon the rioters. The fusileers spoke with them familiarly, as the French guards did with the *tiers-état* in 1789. Turgot wrote from Paris to the king, that the intendant, far from allaying the commotions, encouraged them. St. Sauveur, the friend of Turgot and of free commerce, added, that Lenoir and Sartines were preparing fresh commotions at Paris, to take place on the 3d of the month.

Accordingly, on the 3d, the same agitators of the neighbouring markets continued to assemble at Paris. At seven o'clock in the morning they pillaged the greater part of the bakers' shops, and distributed the bread to the populace. All was over by eleven o'clock. At noon M. de

Biron took possession of the cross-ways and divers posts. The Parisians went out of their houses at one o'clock *to seek for the rioters*, and none could any where be found. In the evening Maurepas appeared at the opera. A design was that day discovered of opening the prisons of the Bicêtre, to join the prisoners with the plunderers. Turgot gave orders for arresting Saurin and Doumer, clerks to M. de Chaumont, declared them to be accessory to the riots, and reported to the king, that a miller of Montmartre had defended his mill, and, without any assistance, repulsed the plunderers by simply firing upon them with a musket. The king sent him a present of a hundred *ecus*.

The parliament taking part with the rioters, passed some resolutions against the system of the free commerce of grain. Malesherbes and Turgot united in depriving the parliament of the cognisance of the affairs pertaining to administration. The resolution of the parliament was torn down by the soldiery, at the command of marshal Biron. The parliament was summoned for the 5th of May, and M. Turgot obtained the king's signature to a blank commission for the command of the troops, which was intrusted to his disposal.

M. Turgot had informed the first president, that it was the king's desire that the parliament should

not concern themselves in this affair; and the king wrote to them to say, that he had discovered "in part the sources of the commotion, that he expected to be soon informed of the whole, and was desirous that the interference of the parliament, whose information on the subject was imperfect, might not traverse his views." The parliament complied, and left the affair to the solicitude of the king.

The king had committed a great fault, on the 2d, at Versailles, by reducing the price of bread to two-pence: it was afterwards re-established upon the current price, by the advice of M. Turgot. At Paris, the fears of the bakers were removed; a guard of soldiers was given them, to protect their shops; they obliged those to resume their business who had abandoned it from terror; and a security for subsistence was restored. The king's troops going to rescue two soldiers who had been taken prisoners by the rioters on the road to Versailles, a skirmish ensued between the two parties, in which muskets being discharged on one side and stones thrown on the other, twenty-three peasants were killed. Among them was found a revolutionist with a blue ribband, which put the people in the country again into commotion.

The citizens of Paris jesting on these events, the milliners and inventors of fashions took part in the insurrection, by changing the last fashion,

and introducing on the third day bonnets *à la révolte*.

A curate being informed that they had chosen the hour of high mass for disturbing his parish, takes off his canonicals, makes a speech, puts himself at the head of his parishioners, and falls upon the rioters.

The same day there were insurrections at Lisle, in Flanders, at Amiens, and at Auxerre. Counterfeited decrees of the council of state were circulated in the provinces, to oblige the farmers to sell corn at half its price. In the afternoon of the 3d of May an order of the police was published every where, leaving to the bakers the power of selling bread according to the assize of corn; which had the effect of putting a stop to the disorders. This order was signed *Lenoir*.

This was the last act of this magistrate, who on this occasion manifested principles opposite to those of Turgot. The minister henceforth separated from the department of the police the business relative to corn. In the mean time, Lewis XVI. informed M. Lenoir, that knowing his principles to be opposite to those of M. Turgot, he should at present dispense with his services, but should not forget those rendered to his grandfather on several occasions, adding, that he was not ignorant of them. Albert, a famous economist, succeeded M. Lenoir;

he was a man of probity, well-informed, constant in his friendships, but incapable of eluding the artifices of the Lenoir party. M. Turgot made a bad choice.

A sketch of the kingdom, then in a critical situation, was put into the hands of the king and queen by madame de Brionne. It expressed a desire for the return of the duke of Choiseul, author of the memoir. The king upon this said to his consort, "Let them never speak to me again of that man." It was reported at the palace, that the Choiseul party had directed the riots against the party of Turgot.

A woman of the lowest class brought some damaged flour to the palace, to present it to the queen; she had the air of a fury; her eyes looked wild, and she seemed extremely eager. She was taken into custody.

In the mean time, the markets were scantily supplied with provisions. To protect the free circulation, marshal Biron ordered troops to be encamped in different places. The black fusileers were stationed upon the banks of the Marne; the grey, upon the Lower Seine; the gendarmerie and light horse, upon the banks of the Upper Seine; while the French guards, the Swiss, and the invalids, protected the shops and the suburbs. An order was issued, prohibiting people from assembling in crowds, and from ex-

acting bread below the current price, under pain of being fired upon by the royal troops, and of being condemned without appeal. "Have we nothing wherewith to reproach ourselves in this business?" said the king to M. Turgot; conformably to his scrupulous conscience.

The parliament, notwithstanding the king's order, caused the resolution of the 4th of May, in favour of receiving information, to be every where posted up: but the soldiers tore in pieces these bills, or covered them with the king's prescript.

Next day, May the 5th, the parliament received orders to repair in a body to Versailles in black robes. It had scrupled to register the letters-patent, which ascribed to Tournelle, at the first interposition of the king, a knowledge of the crimes of the insurgents. The parliament observed, that Tournelle ought not to have received direct orders from the king, and adopted the resolution of the 4th, which the minister rescinded by a decree of council. The parliament being come into the royal presence, the king informed them, that he wished to put a stop to the spirit of plundering, which would otherwise soon degenerate into rebellion, and to provide for the subsistence of Paris: that he was desirous of employing effectual measures for this purpose, and of giving to the jurisdiction of the provost-

marshal all the power of which it was susceptible; promising to leave to the parliament, after tranquillity was restored, the privilege of making inquiry concerning the chiefs of the insurgents and the authors of the rebellion. After some trifling opposition from the prince of Conty and de Fréteau, the only opponents among the members of the parliament, the king dismissed them with the prohibition of making any remonstrance upon the subject, and expressing his confidence that they would throw no obstacles in the way of the measures which he intended to adopt, for preventing the return of any such commotion in future during his reign. The bed of justice was held on the 5th of May.

Marshal Biron, during these transactions, was at the head of twenty-five thousand men, and received orders from M. Turgot. In the court of the provost-marshal two individuals, a gauze-weaver and a peruke-maker, were sentenced to be hanged on a gibbet forty feet high. In mounting the steps, they exclaimed to the people, "that they should die in their cause." Next day the king signed an amnesty, and the people of Paris jesting upon the subject, gave marshal Biron the title of *General of the flour-sacks*.

The sedition had not been occasioned by any real scarcity. There was a sufficient quantity of grain in the markets, and particularly in the provinces where the ravages had been com-

mitted. Neither was it occasioned by any uncommon penury, for corn had been at a higher price, without any disturbance ensuing. The pillage was excited by men, who were strangers in the parishes that had suffered; by men badly clothed, and of the meanest appearance, but who had in their pockets *écus* and even *louis-d'ors* during the time of the insurrection, and while they were thus committing devastation upon the pretext of poverty; they burned the magazines and barns, and called themselves *the defenders of the rights of the people*, whom they excited to plunder; adding, that the government favoured the great at the expence of the community.

Lewis XVI., in this situation, displayed more humanity and moderation than his ministers, and even than M. Turgot himself. In giving an idea of this prince, conformably to the truth of history, let us not forget, that, indulging his natural disposition, he lessened the price of bread, which the ministers raised next day to its former dearness. The amnesty was granted of his own accord, and he would not give his consent to the gibbet of forty feet, but upon condition that this transaction should be followed by an amnesty. The king, in his instructions to curates, some days after, said: "When my people come to know the authors of the disturbance, they will look upon them with horror." But

the king, better informed and more prudent, resolved in the sequel to conceal the causes of it. He burned with his own hand the notes and papers which he had received on the subject. There was still in the council sufficient wisdom to preserve silence as to these political crimes, which it would be difficult to prove, and dangerous to punish.

The history of the corn-riots, written by Condorcet, the intimate friend and historian of Turgot, did not throw more light on the subject, though a man so bold in his writings. "The parliament, during the commotion," said the academician, "passed a resolution, which, in prohibiting tumultuous meetings, begged of the king to cause the price of bread to be lowered. The decree, which was placarded the evening of the riot, might renew it next day. M. Turgot sets off in the night, calls up the king and his ministers, proposes his plan, procures their consent to it, and the bills of the parliament are covered with those of the king, which prohibit riotous meetings under pain of death. The parliament, summoned to Versailles, is informed, by a bed of justice, that the king has rescinded his decree, and grants to the provost-marshal the power of passing judgment upon the rioters. These rioters were not to be found."

This is the sum total of the information, and indeed the very words of M. de Condorcet.

The cause of this riot, however, has been ascribed:

1st, To the English. They said that we were the authors of the troubles in America.

2dly, To the house of Orleans. It was said that this family coveted the crown.

3dly, To the farmers-general. They were believed to be interested in the monopoly.

4thly, To the monopolisers. They were said to be equally interested in this shameful commerce.

5thly, To the bankers. It was affirmed that they were employed by foreign powers, to defray the expence of the riot.

6thly, To the abbé Terray, the clergy, M. de Maurepas, his parliament, &c.

A wise and prudent historian will content himself with describing this insurrection, without lightly accusing either bodies of men or individuals. An erroneous system of administration, badly conducted, and traversed by secret machinations, might have occasioned these commotions. Turgot had done all in his power to give effect to his plan for the freedom of the commerce of corn. To render it ineffectual, the mo-

nopolisers might have excited the troubles. He wished to create a competition between foreign corn and that of the country; for which purpose he had negotiated for purchases and importations. A counter-operation, on the part of the monopolisers, defeated this scheme. Notwithstanding this uncertainty, the police entertained strong suspicions, that England was no stranger to the insurrection.

In concluding the recital of this strange commotion, history ought not to pass over in silence the conduct of Sweden with respect to us. Nations, like individuals, ought not to be insensible to benefits. Sweden, which has been called, with so much reason, the *France of the North*, on hearing of the seditions which had been excited under the pretext of a scarcity, sent to France, as a present, two vessels loaded with corn.

CHAP. XXVI.

History of the Opposition raised against the Administration of M. Turgot.—Mr. Necker publishes his Work against M. Turgot's System of a free Corn-Trade.—The Minister's Resentment against Mr. Necker.—The Chevalier Turgot sends to the Author of these Memoirs some Notes on the Causes of the Riots—Views of the Insurgents in this Riot, according to the Family of M. Turgot.

THE doctrine of M. Turgot, on the freedom of trade in grain, agitating the mind of the public after his elevation to the ministry, the disturbances increased at the epoch of the decree of council of the 7th of April 1775. The corn-riot broke out the beginning of May following; the gibbets were erected on the 18th: a fortnight before, Mr. Necker had published his book on the commerce of grain, against the system of M. Turgot. M. de Maurepas secretly favoured the work; and M. de Pezai, who hated M. Turgot, having circulated it among a number of courtiers, inflamed the minds of the people.

Mr. Necker's polemical work is written in a manner truly sentimental. Those touches and flourishes of style, since found in the works of

the same author, are conspicuous in every part of this performance. By men of the world, the magistrates, and even the ladies of the court, it was universally read. Some blamed the author, for having left the question on the freedom of the corn-trade undecided; others for having written in so temporising a manner as to displease no party, a circumstance which increased the uncertainty. All accused him of having composed, printed, and published at a juncture when the work was more likely to excite a revolution in the government than in the opinions of the people. M. Turgot, understanding that it was on the point of being exposed to sale, wished to prevent its publication. It made its appearance with greater advantage on that account.

It is impossible to express the resentment of M. Turgot on the publication of this book. M. Turgot was fully persuaded, that his measures were intimately connected with the safety of France, and had no opponents but the enemies of the public good. Mr. Necker was known only as a rich banker, an opulent stranger, whom his fellow citizens had created, by accident, minister of the little republic of Geneva, at the court of France. His literary reputation was not yet sufficiently established by the eulogium of Colbert on a work which the academy had dignified by its approbation; a work to which the

author had even refused to put his name, as was the case also with that on the corn-trade. Mr. Necker's friends accused M. Turgot of having attempted to make the Genevese recall their minister; and the friends of M. Turgot charged Mr. Necker with having abused the credit of his office in the diplomatic body, by obtaining secret information in 1763 of the approach of peace, and of purchasing in the English funds, when the stocks were low, to sell out for double value when the peace was concluded. Pezai, who had vanity, assurance, and a great deal of conceit, never ceased from that moment to persecute M. Turgot, by his epigrams, sarcasms, and jests. The economists, on their part, answered Mr. Necker's by pamphlets. M. de Condorcet, to defend his friend, distinguished himself on this occasion. Mr. Necker's party published, by way of retaliation, a print, in which M. Turgot is represented in a carriage with the duchess of Enville. Dupont (de Nemours), de Vaisnes, and the abbés Beaudeau and Roubeau draw them along, and are represented treading upon some heaps of corn. The carriage is overturned, and madame d'Enville displays, in a libertine sort of manner, five words in large letters: *Liberty, liberty, unshackled, entire liberty.*

What seems to have excited most the re-

sentment of M. Turgot's two brothers against Mr. Necker, was the strong inclination he discovered to refute the system of a free commerce of corn, extending it even to exportation. "This," said the two brothers with acrimony, "is combating opinions which we have never professed. The system of government, in the decree of the 13th of September, was wholly confined to the freedom of internal commerce: the decree of council, and the letters-patent, were extended not beyond this bound. It is, therefore, perfectly disingenuous to impute to government, in the month of September 1774, the opinion of an unlimited freedom of commerce."

With regard to the insurrection, the chevalier Turgot gave the following explanation of it in 1784.

"The decree of council, of the 7th of August 1775, had repressed the attempts of the French administrators, who wished to restrict the importation of foreign grain into France. In consequence, great quantities were imported from the North, and from Holland. The provinces, where the people rose into insurrection, were by no means those where the corn was sold at the highest price. The people who plundered it were not men labouring under penury or famine. They threw it into the streets and the

river. They seemed to have no object in the commotion, but to increase the price of corn, and detain it in the hands of the proprietors. The plunderers had with them both gold and silver; and their march was so regulated, that their chief purpose seemed to be, to occasion a famine in Paris, with the design, no doubt, of exciting insurrections there. Considered in this point of view, the movement was well conducted, as a measure of revolt, upon the most refined principles of the military art, and, in all probability, under the conduct of an experienced general. Its regularity and systematic connexion were such, that, after the first breaking out of the disorders, the design of the insurgents was guessed at; and, after the third day, their motions anticipated, wherever they came, by troops who had been sent to oppose them. The measure which had been planned for starving Paris discovered likewise good information; but the hope of exciting the Parisians to insurrection, by pillaging the bread, and throwing it into the dirt before their eyes, produced an effect contrary to their expectation. The people of Paris, observers of these scenes, flocked to them as to a spectacle, attracted by the novelty and whimsical style of the complaints of the insurgents.

"The government saw no other real danger in

this disturbance, than the evil of destroying a great quantity of provisions; of exciting the contiguous provinces; of alarming commerce; of intercepting the arrival of commodities, and thus preventing for a time large cities from being supplied with provisions; and of injuring the public morals, by persuading the licentious populace, that they were at liberty to dispose freely of commodities which were the property of others. M. Turgot, however, by paying immediately fifty thousand livres to a merchant, of the name of Planter, for the value of a boat-load of corn of which we had been plundered, removed the fears of those concerned in the trade. Six hundred thousand livres were expended by the state on indemnifications of this kind, and the authors of this wonderful insurrection beheld their projects utterly defeated.

"These, sir, are facts, and may serve as materials for your historical labours," said the chevalier Turgot to me; "my brother's enemies are all-powerful at present, and he is forgotten; but truth will penetrate through the clouds in which they have been anxious to envelope it." M. Turgot said a great deal more to me upon the subject some months after.

CHAP. XXVII.

Detail of the Administration of M. Turgot.—His Measures during the Year 1776.

THE system of M. Turgot, and the first measures of his administration, have induced us to digress from the law respecting the corn-trade to give an account of the revolt. We must now resume the detail of his administration.

M. Turgot considered as a basis of his measures, the amelioration of property and its produce. It was chiefly upon this produce that he proposed to establish the revenues of the state. Upon entering on his administration, his first labour was to reform the public expenditure and receipts. The expenditure for 1775 amounted to twenty-two millions more than the estimated sum of the imposts. The state was indebted seventy-eight millions by anticipations; every department was loaded besides with a very large debt immediately demandable; and the pensions were three years in arrears: so great had been the disorder and dilapidations towards the end of the late king's reign

By a decree of council, of the 25th of September 1774, he annulled the thirty years lease of the king's domains, and substituted in its stead an administration of nine years. The assistants incommoded the farmers-general; but he had respect for those already established, and only abolished them in future. He improved the revenues of the state six-fold in the management of the farms, and suppressed four intendants of commerce.

The farmers-general, at the signing of their leases, were in the habit of giving a hundred thousand crowns to the minister of the finances. This present, under the old government, was known by the ignoble denomination of the *loaves and fishes*; and as, in the revolutions of the court, which disturbed the close of the reign of Lewis XV., the farmers-general observed, that the comptrollers-general, often exiled or dismissed in a short time after their promotion, did not receive the whole of the perquisite, they divided the amount into fifty thousand livres a year, that a greater number of the ministers of finance might profit by it. Notwithstanding this measure, the farmers-general found themselves still so bad calculators, that, at the epoch of M. Turgot's retirement, it was necessary to divide anew these fifty thousand livres into six parts, since, in the year 1776, the

port-folio of the finances passed, in a few months, from M. Turgot to M. de Maurepas, M. Bertin, M. de Clugny, M. Taboureau, and Mr. Necker, who treated for the *loaves and fishes* in the same way as M. Turgot.

M. Turgot, in reality, displeased with the very name of the present, gave orders to distribute the three hundred thousand livres among the curates of Paris, to procure work for the poor, to collect the profit of it, and increase the fund. The public, persuaded till now that the administration in France was never aspired to but for the gratification of avarice and the thirst of power, were struck with admiration at the conduct of this minister, who, for the first time in the revolution of ages, had introduced at court such signal delicacy and disinterestedness; and the capital, edified by the example, called him *the virtuous minister*.

This act, so opposite to the motives of the herd of candidates for office, created many secret enemies to M. Turgot. The admiration of the public became a source of discontent and raillery against the minister, who thus preached at court disinterestedness and virtue. But firm in his principles of delicacy, M. Turgot continued to prosecute his plan of reform. He had deprived the hospitals of the exclusive privilege of selling meat during Lent, conceiving it

to be a religious privilege which it was in his power to abolish; and soon afterwards he employed himself, contrary to the wishes of the clergy, upon a general system of toleration.

In the middle of the year 1775, he turned his thoughts, during the king's coronation, to the suppression of the company of privileged merchants at Rheims, and devised measures for their reimbursement. It was with the same view that he cancelled the lease of the gunpowder manufacturers. The art of making saltpetre, brought to perfection in other countries, was yet in its infancy among the French. The farmers, who had only a lease of six years, were ignorant of the process, and, in so short a time, could not become acquainted with the method of perfecting the art. All those whose leases were cancelled, murmured against M. Turgot. He substituted, however, for the farmers who were unfit for this business, a man of integrity, named le Faucheux, and joined to him the celebrated chemist Lavoisier. What a misfortune? This employment proved the cause of his death. Cruelty and avarice precipitated him from the post to which virtue and his talents had called him. Lavoisier contributed to improve the art of making nitre. The minister published his method; and sent learned men even to India, to

investigate the subject, and bring the art to perfection.

Some time after, the clamour against innovations increased, when M. Turgot put into a new train of management the public messenger's office, annulled the leases, and united the department with that of the posts. He established the posts, with horses at every four leagues; and allowed the masters of the posts the inspection of the routes, in which they are so much interested. He authorised the state-countries to borrow at four per cent, sums that were offered them for reimbursing the capitals fixed at five. The measure went so far as to change the assessment of all the rents upon the state, which he resolved to set free. He declared many arts, subject to corporations, to be free professions; he ordained, that every manufacturer might dispose of his commodity wherever he pleased; and by this reform he abolished the obligation of selling exclusively in one place, and at a fixed price.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Elevation of M. de Malesherbes, the Friend of M. Turgot, to the Ministry—Portrait of this Philosopher—His Opinions on the political Decisions of the Republic of Letters and the Protestants and Philosophers.—Curious Dialogue between M. Malesherbes and the Author of these Memoirs.—Literary Project of M. de Malesherbes.

M. DE MALESHERBES had in his disposition a sincerity and ingenuousness, rarely to be met with in the age in which he lived, or in the ministry to which he was called. His conversation never betrayed so much as a shadow of those falsehoods which are tolerated in society. This simplicity was the principal ornament of his mind; his thoughts and sentiments developed themselves without premeditation or effort. I have seen him gay, and sometimes even childishly sportive, at the castle of Malesherbes. To this sportiveness, however, often succeeded a manly energy. The movements of his mind were always of this description, and resembled the animation of those artists who are truly in love with their art, whenever the subject that

occupied him related to three objects which were dear to his heart—*beneficence, liberty, and the progress of knowledge and science.*

How much he was interested in the great objects which have attracted the public attention, at the end of the eighteenth century, he has given sufficient proof. At an advanced age, he ascended in one of Montgolfier's balloons, to make an experiment.

His simplicity of manners was a subject of pleasantry among the courtiers, brought up in the practice of dissimulation and artifice; the name by which they called him was *the good man.* He was, indeed, incapable of the disingenuous arts usual in that class of society; but if he told them of their faults, it was with politeness; and to those who made improper demands, he answered, with a kind of half smile, which softened the refusal. This smile was known among his friends and the persons of consideration, with whom he had intercourse, as the only artifice of which he was capable towards men whom he despised, or whose principles were opposite to his own. His expression at those times was different from that of his friend Turgot, whose countenance instantly betrayed his contempt: it differed also from that of the abbé Terray, who made use of profound dissimulation; from that of M.

de Calonne, who eluded the requests of suitors by pretending not to hear them; from that of Mr. Necker, who affected on such occasions a haughtiness of demeanour; from that of M. d'Aranda, who resisted applications with a speech of persuasive denial, and concluded with repeating two or three times over, *You comprehend—you understand me*; and, lastly, it differed from that of d'Alembert, who had recourse to an epigram.

M. de Malesherbes, licenser of the bookselling business, under the reign of Lewis XV., had constantly aided and protected the rising philosophy: he professed, in opposition to the French clergy, the *rival opinions of the parliaments, and the hostile principles of the philosophers.* He patronised the men of letters who wrote against the christian religion, and secretly facilitated the printing of their works, mitigating in their favour the severity of the laws, which he rigorously exercised towards religious writers. The republic of letters, administered according to these maxims, felt itself in a little time revive. A number of literary productions made their appearance with tacit or verbal permission, which changed the opinions and manners that prevailed under the old government, and gave the clergy disquietude, which they manifested in their remonstrances.

It was then that M. de Malesherbes declared openly in his writings and conversation, that the decisions of the republic of letters were the judicial judgments of a tribunal: he said, that this tribunal was independent of all powers; and that it would, from its nature, attract the respect paid to other tribunals, appreciate all talents, decide upon all kinds of merit, in an age when every citizen was at liberty to deliver his sentiments to the nation in literary publications, and become in France what the orators of Greece and Rome formerly were in the midst of assemblies of the people. Mr. Necker, afterwards, called this tribunal *the public opinion;* and in this respect these two ministers ought to be considered as innovators in politics, professing each the doctrine, that *the republic of letters* and *the public opinion* were the regulators of governments; the first duty of which has been in all empires, to regulate *the public opinion* as well as *the republic of letters*, without distinction, lest these powers should regulate them, and in a very extraordinary way.

M. de Malesherbes and Mr. Necker were both of the opinion, that, a happy enthusiasm having taken possession of men's minds, the time was arrived when every man capable of thinking and of writing ought to turn his attention to the public good. This opinion was in

M. de Malesherbes, as in MM. Necker and Turgot, the result of their plans of the perfectibility of the human species. The French monarchy, though more happy and flourishing than any power of Europe, was the object of their satires and derision. M. de Malesherbes carried his zeal of reform so far as to say publicly, on the day when he was received at the French academy: "I will venture to predict, that, for the future, none of you will call to mind the ages of heroism and barbarism, without detesting what to our ancestors was the object of admiration." The age of philosophy brought to trial the age of chivalry.

M. de Malesherbes exercised the same jurisdiction over despotism and superstition. When his office gave him power over the *lettres-de-cachet*, he was seen to tear in pieces with pleasure those which the late king had signed against the philosophers; while, in the opinion of the public, he was the person who induced Lewis XVI. to sign that which he dispatched against the marquis of Brunoi, famous in France for the sums which he expended on processions and the embellishment of the church. Brunoi was confined in a convent, and allowed a pension.

M. de Malesherbes, an infidel and a philosopher, made no secret of his principles to men

of letters, whom he loved, nor to those with whom he kept company; but he did not discover his sentiments to the vassals upon his estate. I observed attentively this celebrated person, at his country-seat, when a mountain in the neighbourhood, in 1782, excited the curiosity of the naturalists in the capital. For the purpose of describing his character, I shall relate, word for word, what passed between us relative to opinions; and I refer to the journals of Paris, for the month of March 1782, for details with regard to the mountain.

Dialogue between M. de Malesherbes and the Author of these Memoirs.

MALESHERBES.—"Let us go to mass," he said to me, smiling; "I would not give offence either to the curate or the opinions of these good people: I should be sorry to lose their confidence. But when you return to Paris, tell this anecdote to M. de Condorcet; he certainly will make me a great man, after my death, in his panegyric, and he will cite this anecdote, which he will publicly read at the academy."

SOULAVIE.—"It is now a hundred years since Lamoignon de Baville tyrannised over my country, of which he was the intendant; and

you see what is the instability of opinions and of the national character in France. Lamoignon de Baville was the instrument of fanaticism, and Lamoignon de Malesherbes is at this present time the friend of philosophy. Baville was the tyrant of the protestants; and Malesherbes, their protector, interests himself in their misfortunes. Baville filled with protestants both the towers of Aiguemortes and the fortress of Brescou, as I learned from marshal Richelieu, commandant of Languedoc, who told me that he set many of them at liberty, after more than thirty years imprisonment; and Malesherbes has commenced his administration by fixing an indelible stigma on all the prisons of the state."

MALESHERBES.—"When I peruse the manuscript memoirs of the family, when I read the orders which M. de Baville executed in the name of the king in your country, I wish I could erase from my family the name of the intendant of Languedoc, now become odious. Happily, the details of his administration are not known."

SOULAVIE.—"They are so well known, that the fugitive and irritated protestants have made an appeal concerning them to the tribunal of history, and have published, abroad, four volumes in quarto; whence the abbé Raynal has drawn

his portraits, and melancholy complaints against the government of Lewis XIV. The character of Baville, which Raynal read to me, I have found again in the history which I cite to you; and it depends on you to dispose of my book, where all the acts of the intendant are recorded."

M. de Malesherbes added, that this work would be to him a new motive for repairing the evils done to France by Lamoignon de Baville, intendant of Languedoc.

M. de Malesherbes had conceived the idea of rendering Paris the universal capital of literary men. Foreigners would bring thither the productions of the sciences and arts as to a new Thebes, which received the tribute of all the known world by its hundred gates. Paris was to become the rendezvous of the sciences and arts; and a journal of their progress was to be established there, to serve as a channel for the communication of all knowledge.

Such was the virtuous personage whom M. de Maurepas, at the instance of M. Turgot, was desirous of giving the king, in a moment of embarrassment, to make sure that Lewis XVI. should have for the minister of his household a man of integrity. M. de Malesherbes declined for a long time to accept the office of minister. He had many private audiences of Lewis XVI., "and I did not accept it," said he

to me, " at last, till I was well assured, from my own knowledge, that this prince was plain in his manners, a friend to reform, moral in his conduct, and he had promised me, that he would not make me sign any *lettre-de-cachet* but such as I should desire myself; and farther, that I should only be minister for a time, with the power of resuming my liberty, without any obstruction from his majesty."

The king, desirous of obtaining his confidence, made him minister, by appointing him secretary of state. He succeeded the duke of la Vrillière, who had enjoyed the place fifty-two years. M. de Malesherbes began his administration by making a visit to the Bastille, where he set at liberty seven prisoners. Some days after, he spoke to the council about a reform of the king's household. With regard to this project, Turgot and Malesherbes requested of the king, that he would permit them to have the honour of incurring the odium of the courtiers, who condemned the plan. Turgot spoke of making a new valuation of the kingdom, which should subject the great, as well as the people, to contributions. The count du Muy, in opposition to the two philosophers, answered, that the most approved ministers, who under Lewis XIII. and Lewis XIV. had in vain

attempted it, were obliged to relinquish the project, on account of the invincible resistance to it, which it was not now the interest of the king to revive. The prince withdrew, without giving an opinion on the subject.

CHAP. XXIX.

Consideration on the Revolution effected in the Ministry at the Time of the Fall of M. de la Vrillière and the Accession of M. de Malesherbes to the Administration.—Sketch of the Administration of fifty Years of the Minister M. de la Vrillière.—The House of Bourbon, during half a Century, exercised its military Power—It entrusted its Destiny, in 1775, to the Philosophy brought into Administration.—Phænomenon of the Metamorphosis of the military Power into a philosophical Administration.

THE philosopher who reflects on the progress of the human passions, observant of the events which precede extraordinary changes in politics, ought here to make a pause.

At this period we find M. de Malesherbes, guided by probity and the love of humanity, replacing a minister, to mention whose name is almost an affront to the nation.

We behold on the other side M. de la Vrillière, celebrated for his acts of despotism, and minister of France ever since the regency of the duke of Orleans, retire at last from the administration.

On one side, Malesherbes brings into the government, in the administration of the king's household, the love of liberty.

On the other side, M. de la Vrillière closes an administration military and absolute; an administration which he had conducted during half a century; and he deposits it in the hands of philosophers, who can hardly retain it a few months.

M. de la Vrillière had seen pass under his eyes, during the fifty years of his ministry,

1ſt, The reign of folly, that of the abbé Dubois, alternatively jansenist and jesuit:—a jansenist, to become minister when that party prevailed; a jesuit, to obtain from Rome a cardinal's hat.

2dly, M. de la Vrillière had seen pass under his eyes the reign of the terrible madame de Prie, mistress of *the duke*, first minister and father of the prince de Condé, whose administration was conducted by principles so untoward, so insignificant, and so military.

3dly, He had seen the thirty years of the ministry of the wise cardinal Fleury, who had regenerated France by his principles of moderation alone, and by permitting that active and ingenious nation to follow the dictates of its own genius.

4thly, He had seen the folly, the vices, the hatreds, the extravagant ostentation, the subaltern, aukward, and false politics of madame de Pompadour, directing the diplomatic body,

the armies, and the ministry, of the first power in the world, which she degraded and placed in the class of nations of the second rank.

5thly, He had seen France dishonoured under madame Dubarry and Lewis XV., sunk in the arms of vice, and of a vice which added to its nature the fault of pusillanimity; that is, the despicable and feeble vice which leads states to a fatal precipice, or an internal dissolution of government.

6thly, He had seen the virtuous Lewis XVI., of no account under Lewis XV., ascend the throne, and call to it virtue and the love of liberty.

M. de la Vrillière had signed an incalculable number of *lettres-de-cachet*, not only under the regent, but under the reign of Lewis XV. and even that of Lewis XVI.

The ministry had at first thrown into the Bastille and exiled the molinists, the friends of the pope, to gratify the regent, who had himself to gratify the parliament, from which he held his authority.

It had afterwards thrown into the Bastille the jansenists, the friends of the regent and enemies of the pope, to please the abbé Dubois, who wished to obtain of the court of Rome the dignity of a cardinal.

It had since committed to the Bastille the enemies of the court of Rome when cardinal

Fleury was desirous of becoming pope. (See on this subject the manuscripts of Ledran, a jansenist and chief of the office of foreign affairs, who has disclosed the state-secret of cardinal Fleury.)

It had sent to the Bastille the philosophers who first published their opinions about the end of the eighteenth century.

It had often seen exiled or thrown into the Bastille the parliaments in opposition to the court, and at first under the regent, who exiled them to Pontoise. They were twice exiled afterwards, under cardinal Fleury and madame de Pompadour, and definitively under M. d'Aiguillon and madame Dubarry. And now, after having exiled the duke of Choiseul and the parliaments, under M. de Maupeou, it exiled, under the reign of Lewis XVI., the abbé de Terray and de Maupeou himself, who had ordered all these banishments. Thus did the house of Bourbon so exercise its authority, that, in 1774, there was not in France any opinion, or any religious or political system, of which M. de la Vrillière had not banished the author, during the fifty years that he had occupied the department of the *lettres-de-cachet*.

Almost all the orders of the state were concerned, in 1774, that there should not be one rule of fixed conduct in the government for the adminis-

tration of the power which deprived the French of their liberty. The jansenists and jesuits, the parliaments and the authorities most devoted to the crown, the opinions of despotism and of liberty, all were sacrificed indiscriminately. France, filled with indignation, desired that the court might adopt a plan of conduct; and it was generally believed, that philosophy would dictate it to authority. Such was the cause of the elevation of M. de Malesherbes. This magistrate, subjected to a *lettre-de-cachet* in 1771, became the minister of *lettres-de-cachet* in 1775, and accepted the place only upon the condition that he never should sign any more.

Philosophy therefore saw itself established at the side of the throne. At this epoch I lived with the chief almoner of madame, and he assured me, that M. Turgot had converted the king to philosophy, and particularly to the system of economy.

Philosophy was established in the royal family. The king's aunts and monsieur were adverse to it; but the queen and count d'Artois favoured it in secret.

It was established among the clergy. The bulk of the clergy was doubtless religious, devout, pious, believing, superstitious, credulous in the extreme; but it was impotent, because the philosophical party, that is, an auda-

cious minority, atheistical and leagued with the government, possessed the ascendancy.

Philosophy was established in the ministry: to name Maurepas, Malesherbes, and Turgot, is to show with what boldness it appeared at the head of government.

Philosophy at length prevailed in the republic of letters. Voltaire was yet living, and one of his sarcasms had more force, was more terrible and fatal to the ancient institutions, than all the *lettres-de-cachet* were favourable to absolute authority. These *lettres-de-cachet*, the censures of the Sorbonne, the acts of the parliament, instead of being regarded as punishments and marks of disgrace, were become brevets of honour, and letters of nobility, of a new kind. It was in this situation of our manners, of our courage, of our progress in the road of philosophy and a national reform, that the minister of the king, successively entitled *count de St. Florentine* and *duke of Vrillière*, having his friend, his relation, his protector, at the head of the affairs of France, was obliged to descend from the ministry. During his whole life he had administered the affairs of the monarchy by *lettres-de-cachet*, levelled against the different sorts of innovators who assailed it in all quarters; and now the author of so many arbitrary orders became the object of one of them himself, issued

not by the will of the king, but by the offended power of philosophy, who demanded, that the ancient power should in its turn bend in her presence: we shall see hereafter in what manner.

Thus fell M. de Vrillière into a state of insignificance, and in his fall resigned the exercise of authority into the victorious hands of philosophy, introduced at the side of the king into the seat of the executive government. The military power, *the good pleasure of the king*, thus tumbled into the mire: liberty stepped forth from its retreat. Lewis XVI., to whom there now remains no other place than that which will be preserved to him by judicious and impartial historians—historians the friends of the country, as of a real republic—Lewis XVI., who had foresight, understanding, information; who seemed to descry at a distance the issue of the revolution which he himself organised in the state, remained a calm spectator of the operations which gradually overturned his monarchy. No efficacious remedy was applied till the disorder had become incurable.

In this catastrophe of the old constitution, it is however to be remarked, that philosophy, persecuted at court, and now called thither, found itself in a situation new and aukward. La Vrillière had known how to maintain his power there

for half a century. Malesherbes in a few months found his credit in danger; and when he had retired, the good Lewis XVI. might say with truth, as has already been observed in this work, "M. Turgot and I are the only persons here who love the people."

It deserves finally to be remarked, that the greatest error of government, in the administration of *lettres-de-cachet*, consisted not so much in the exercise of this power for depriving the French of their liberty, as in the defective regulations, and the irregular plan of conduct pursued by the court on this subject. What at that time was the destiny of the French? The jansenists, for instance, favoured at the accession of Lewis XV. to the throne; thrown into the Bastille in 1720, when Dubois wished to be a cardinal; thrown into it again when Fleury aspired to the popedom; lastly, protected by the duke of Choiseul, and recompensed? A Frenchman, for manifesting austere morals, or rigid opinions, might be imprisoned seven or eight times in his life. It was necessary, therefore, that, both in morals and opinions, he should have a versatility like that of a government assailed by every tempest, to be assured of his liberty. It was the variety, the dissonance, the relative opposition of all the mal-content parties, and their singular coalition against government, which exer-

cised the power of the *lettres-de-cachet*, and substituted in the room of la Vrillière the virtuous Malesherbes, who attempted to introduce order into this department of the executive power.

CHAP. XXX.

Principles of the Administration of M. de Malesherbes, extracted from his Memorials sent to the King after his Retirement from Office—His Opinions on Lettres-de-cachet—He wished to establish a particular Board, for determining the Exercise of them—He maintains the Necessity of convoking the States-general, and the States of the Provinces—He insists upon the Preponderance of the Tiers-état in those Assemblies—He refutes the Opinions of the Great on the Form of their Constitution.—M. de Malesherbes was in 1775 *a Revolutionary of* 1789.

IN a memorial sent to the king by M. de Malesherbes, this minister expresses himself in the following manner:

"I have found in the Bastille and at Vincennes more than half of those who have been committed to these prisons within the last fifteen years: they were either become actually insane, or so disordered in their minds, as to render it highly dangerous to restore them to liberty." This minister, therefore, persuaded the king to appoint himself a board for the management of *lettres-de-cachet*, without the participation of the ministers of state.

"I trembled when, at my accession to the

ministry, I found myself seated at my desk opposite to a single clerk, and was the absolute master of pronouncing arbitrarily the most terrible condemnations.

" If others have more assurance than myself, it is perhaps an additional reason why the king should grant them associates in the exercise of this department. I add, that had I proposed to the king this plan while I was in the ministry, it might be thought that I was ambitious of reaping the glory of it. Who knows whether I should not have been suspected of a design to arrogate to myself an authority over the other departments, in flattering myself with having always a superior influence over the conductors of the office which I myself had invented? But after my retirement, if the king, of his own accord, will impose this law upon his ministers, the glory will be all his own, and this glory will not be so inconsiderable in the eyes of Europe as the people of the court and in office are willing to imagine."

In this memorial, M. Malesherbes thinks it hard that the people should have no other representatives than the parliaments, " who love to play a part," said he to the king.

Malesherbes, as yet exiled in 1774, sent to

M. de Maurepas, on the accession of the king to the throne, a memoir on the states-general, and on the states of the provinces. The grandees of the court were favourable to this project; their large possessions would give them a powerful influence. "It will be tyrant lords substituted," said Malesherbes, "to tyrant ministers, and the tyranny will be still more oppressive in the hands of the former.

"A governor of a province will advise the king to make them like the states of Burgundy.

"A great lord, rich in lands, will propose that they should resemble those of Bretany; and if he choose to live upon his estate, he will be the head of the country.

"A great prelate will wish them to be constituted like those of Languedoc, Provence, and Bigorre; while there is wanted a constitution of provincial estates, to assure to all the subjects the liberty of maintaining their rights, and watching over their affairs, without injuring the royal authority, and without any one order becoming the oppressor of another." M. de Malesherbes, as well as M. Turgot, thought that the preponderance of the *tiers-état* was the only means capable of preventing all oppression.

Attempts were made to prepossess the king against the religious sentiments of M. de

Malesherbes, whenever it was in contemplation to call him to the ministry. " My friendship for the greater part of those who are at present denominated philosophers," says he in his memorial, " and my taste for reading their writings, have never blinded me with regard to the lengths to which they would go, if left to be their own masters; and nobody has ever respected true piety more than I have done. I do myself this justice, and arrogate the encomium in my own favour, because it is necessary for my obtaining from the king the indulgence, that he will listen with attention, and without any prepossession, to the important truths which I shall have the boldness to present to him."

Malesherbes discovered no satisfaction in the labours of his ministry; he appeared a misanthrope, a visionary, and thought himself misplaced at court, where all was in opposition to his plan of reform. He asked leave of the king to retire. The king yielded to his request. M. de Malesherbes told me, that he presumed at that time to sound the king as to his opinion respecting M. Turgot, and that his majesty declined saying any thing on the subject.

He complained, that, in the last assembly of the clergy, as in the last affairs of the parliament, the only motive of their deliberations had been to attack the ministers who had incurred the

displeasure of those bodies, and whose influence was dreaded in the king's council. "In reality," said he, "that influence no longer exists there."

Malesherbes was descended from the family of Lamoignon, celebrated in history for its virtues and morals. At the time when Lewis XV. resolved on the ruin of the parliaments, he was first president of the court of aids. He had demanded, in the remonstrances of which he was compiler, the convocation of the states-general. He observed, that the courts of justice supplied in a very imperfect manner the functions of those national assemblies. He added, that no reparation had been made to France; that she remained without organs of political security, and he moved for the convocation of the deputies. In this opinion he coincided with M. Turgot, as well as in his principles on the democratical organisation of the states, which he wished to be composed of landholders, and those only. M. de Malesherbes and M. Turgot were in this respect among the revolutionists of 1789.

CHAP. XXXI.

Results of the System of Administration of M. de Malesherbes, Minister and Secretary of State, sent to Lewis XVI. by M. de Malesherbes, a short Time after his Retirement.—Portrait of Lewis XVI., written by M. de Malesherbes in this Situation.—Project of a Reform of the King's Household.—Zeal of the Minister for its Accomplishment—Opposition of the Courtiers.

THE whole of M. de Malesherbes' doctrine, as well as the pieces recited in the preceding chapter, are comprised in the memorial which I found in the king's port-folios.

"The king came to the throne," said M. de Malesherbes, "at a time when a plan of economy was the general wish of the kingdom, exhausted by the dissipations of the late reigns.

"The public did not hesitate to acknowledge, that the king had none of the expensive tastes which are so ruinous to states; he had none of the pageantry of Lewis XIV.; he had no immoderate passion for pleasures; he had none of those whims, so often engendered through the indolence of princes. They acknowledged, on

the contrary, that he was endowed with the two virtues most opposite to dissipation, namely, justice, and an innate love of regularity and order.

"It is proper the king should know, that the acclamations, so general and so flattering, which broke forth on his accession, were owing in a great measure to the opinion conceived of him with regard to this point; for, when a nation is so unhappy as France was at that time, it is its real wants which excite it to thought and action; and of all the abuses imputed to the late times, nothing had so strongly affected the people as the excessive burden of the imposts, occasioned by the profusion of expenditure.

"Of all the branches of expenditure, that of the king's household was the department concerning which the demand for economy and reform was most loud and vehement.

"In the department of war, the marine, and foreign affairs, at the same time that the public are solicitous for a retrenchment of the expenses, they are fearful of diminishing the strength of the nation; but in the king's household the introduction of economy can be productive of no danger to the state; every thing the king reforms will be taking so much from himself; and though others should fear that the splendor of the crown would be diminished, I will venture to say the king is so good as to

entertain no such apprehension, and that it is not by pomp and magnificence that a king of France is respected.

" I will take upon me to assure his majesty, that, except the individuals of his court, nobody receives any gratification from the pomp displayed in it; and that an exterior simplicity, a retrenchment of all ostentation and all superfluity, will increase the veneration both of his majesty's subjects and of strangers.

" The reformation of expenses, therefore, in this department, is what is most generally desired; it is this which will do most honour to the king, and for which the nation will likewise be the more grateful, as it will appear to them a personal sacrifice. In fact, this reform cannot be the work of a minister; for it is necessary that the king himself, upon a persuasion of the expediency of it, should implicitly consent to every sacrifice which it may be judged advisable to make. It is this which will set an example of economy, so necessary to be carried into the other departments of administration. It is this also which will establish upon a solid basis the credit so necessary to the finances.

" This credit will easily revive, when the public perceive that the king is willing to begin the system of retrenchments in his own household. Without this, all the projects of economy will be

ascribed only to the ministers, whose precarious situation can inspire no solid confidence in the public.

"These were my sentiments before I was called into his majesty's service, and they are not peculiar to me: they are not the result of a speculative theory, but coincide with the opinions of France in general, and of Europe, with the exception of a few individuals of the court, who, unfortunately for the nation, enjoy an exclusive access to the king. His majesty thought proper to call me into administration, and to give me the department of the household: the king knows with what reluctance I accepted it, and that I requested of his majesty an express assurance, that the duration of my appointment should be only for a short period.

"Without entering at present into all the causes which induced me to quit so eminent a situation, one of the principal was the necessity of this reform, and the little disposition I felt for a work so remote in its nature from all the habits of my life. I explained myself on this subject to M. de Maurepas and the comptroller-general; and the king was not ignorant of it.

"I was answered, that I should be excused from that trouble; that a general plan of economical reform of the king's household would be made by order of the comptroller-general, and

presented to the king; and that, after his approbation, though the execution would concern my department only, it would be easy for me to foresee, that it would not commence till after I had retired from office.

"The project of causing a plan of the reform of the king's household, to be made by persons who were strangers to this branch of administration, had both its advantages and inconveniences. The advantage is, that it is difficult for a man brought up in the king's household, imbued with the principles prevalent there, and prepossessed with opinions dear to those who live in the atmosphere of the court, to cut so deep as is necessary into certain abuses, which in his eyes appear to have almost the validity of laws. The inconvenience is, that it is difficult for a man not conversant with the details of this administration to avoid mistakes on many points, notwithstanding the accurate information with which he may be furnished.

"In respect of other considerations, the plan of the comptroller-general might have been modified by those who were best acquainted with the service of the court, and according to the measures I had agreed upon: I trusted that such would be the mode of prosecuting the business, and I waited the success of it, when count St. Germain was appointed minister of war.

"M. St. Germain is a great man in the military department, and is acquainted with all the details of it; whereas, I have never been a courtier, nor an equerry, nor a steward of the household, nor a master of the wardrobe. The march of M. St. Germain has likewise been very different from mine, and much more rapid: he began with undertaking great and difficult reforms; I know not whether the king has ever been well instructed as to the effect which M. St. Germain's measures have produced on all France. I will venture to say for him, that the people are dissatisfied only at what he could not perform; and that the minister, whose reputation it is so important to preserve, loses a part of it in every instance that he is stopped in his progress, and obliged either entirely to relinquish the reforms which he had projected, or execute them only in part."

CHAP. XXXII.

Sequel of the Administration of M. Turgot in 1776.—His Principles respecting Annuities.

AFTER an interruption, during six weeks only, of the dilapidations of the court, and after an equal duration of severe economy, M. Turgot diminished the anticipations in the sum of twenty-eight millions: so rich in resources is our incomparable nation; and so true is it, that it only wants wisdom in the government to perform prodigies in a few months by the reform of dilapidations alone.

M. Turgot considered the royal lottery of France as an impost which tended to corrupt the people by insensible degrees. He entertained the same opinion of annuities: they induce the egotist to sacrifice to his own gratification the duties which he owes to posterity; they load the state with double interest; they are injurious to population, and destroy the bonds of domestic society.

His theory of loans corresponded with that of our great ministers. "Not to borrow" was

one of the preliminary written conditions which he presented to the king previous to his accepting a place in administration; while his successor seemed to have accepted the office under the condition of borrowing perpetually. M. Turgot, however, wished to establish a loan always open at the interest of four per cent. per annum, not for the receipt, but to effect a general conversion of the old loans, which were at five per cent., into four per cents.: he had made a trial of it in the lands of the state, and expected in a few years to diminish the constituted debt by one-fifth.

The *caisse d'escompte* was established in 1775, by M. Turgot, or rather authorised, in consequence of the demand of the actionaries. It was to lend the king ten millions, at four per cent., to be redeemable, by regular payments, in thirteen years. It had a fund of five millions for the discount of its bills subscribed by three respectable persons. These five millions were to increase every year by the reimbursement promised by government. This company would have derived credit from the funds constituted by government, and the confidence reposed in the morality of the state in 1775, during the second year of the king's reign.

At this epoch Lewis XVI. had formally declared, that he would not suffer a bankruptcy;

that he wished to adopt a system of economy, to relieve the state, and secure the income of the renters. The title of *Lewis the Severe*, which this young prince promised he should one day deserve, was a sufficient security at that time, on account of the character of the people, little inclined to be mistrustful, to effect the speculations respecting the *caisse d'escompte*. But the dismission of M. Turgot, and a clearer view of the character of the court, impressing the actionaries with apprehensions relative to their funds, the ten millions which ought to have been paid into the royal treasury the first of June 1776, were retained by them.

M. Turgot applied himself to the grand project of internal navigation: he placed d'Alembert, Bossut, and Condorcet, at the head of these affairs. He created a fund for establishing a professorship of hydrostatics, in favour of the abbé Bossut, a celebrated mathematician, who still occupies the chair. Zoology gave place to the institution of the royal society of medicine, which henceforth employed itself on medical geography, and the causes of local diseases. He purchased the secret of the remedy for the tape-worm, and published it. He countenanced Parmentier, who improved the ammunition-bread of the soldiers; the abbé Morellet, who

composed a dictionary of commerce; and the abbé Roubeau, who wrote the history of the finances of France, from the foundation of the monarchy. He sent St. Emond to the East-Indies, to study the nature and art of manufacturing saltpetre, (the vessel was lost on its passage); he sent Dombey to Peru, and the abbé Rosier into Corsica, for the establishment of a school of agriculture, and improving in that island the oil and wine.

The gabels, or excise on salt, produced to the king only fifty millions, while they cost eighty to those on whom they were levied. This kind of impost was become odious to the common people and the small proprietors of lands; and he had resolved at a future period to abolish it.

M. Turgot also projected the abolition of the duties on exports. He was of opinion, that such a measure would give us a vast superiority over England, and prevent her from contending with us for the future. England made annually three millions sterling by the exports. Thus she would be forced to sacrifice a considerable part of her revenues, or have the mortification to see the commerce, from which it was derived, transferred to France. M. Turgot was of opinion, that, in the competition of two neighbouring states, for

loading commerce with so considerable a sum, the conduct of the power which refused to burden it with seventy-two millions ought to have the preference in trade.

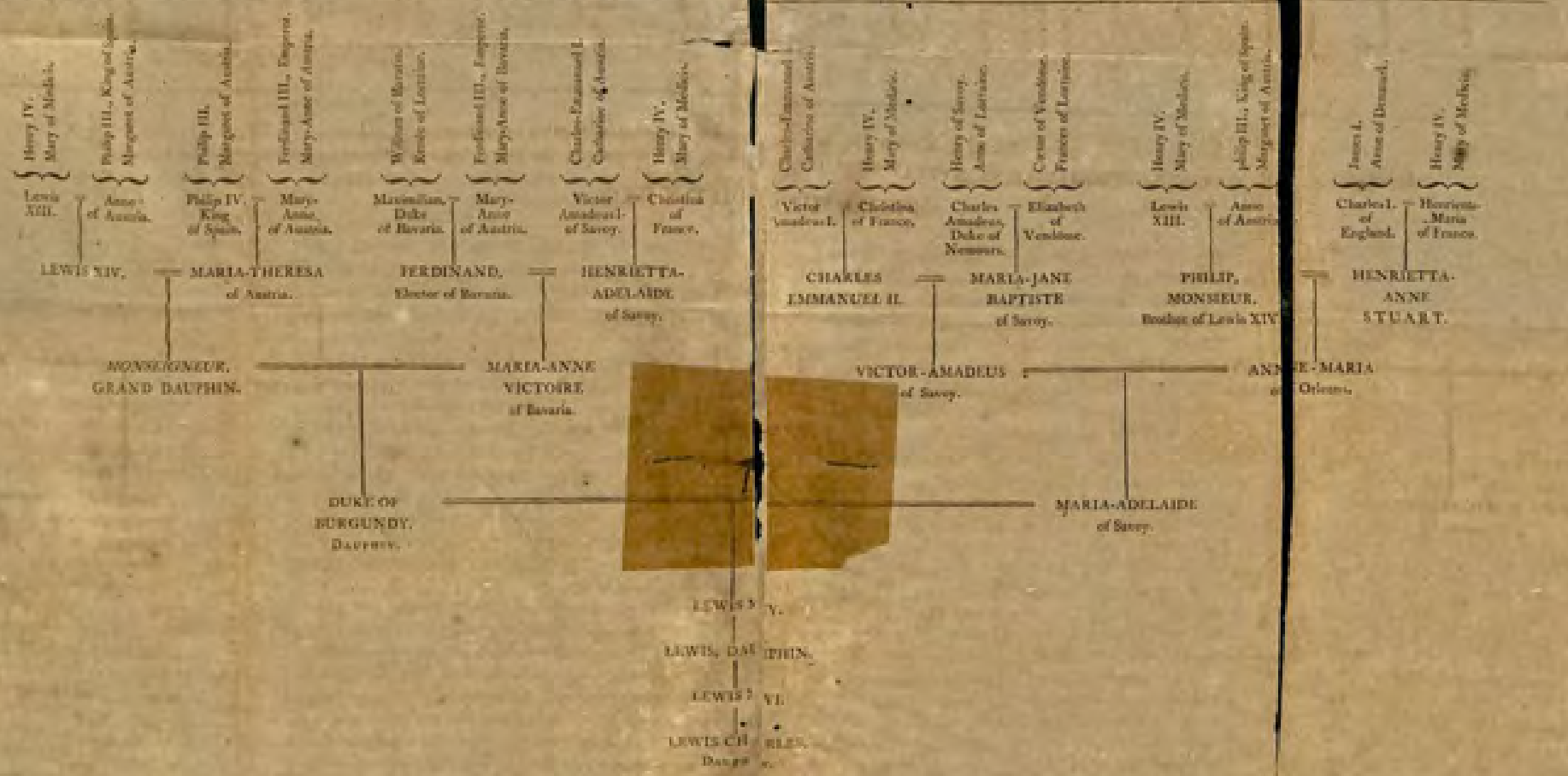
M. Turgot had discovered, that the English carried so far their disregard to the right of nations, that there was still at Birmingham, in 1775, a sort of mint, almost public, for the fabrication of pieces of the value of two sous, in imitation of the French coin. This money had become at Calais, Dunkirk, and in our towns on the coast, a considerable contraband trade. M. Turgot was desirous of obtaining, in an amicable manner, the abolition of this practice, or else to employ some extraordinary remedy. By fabricating pieces of silver, of the value of two sous, in the form of a ring, he expected to abolish that of the base money counterfeited in England, and to preserve only the inferior coin in pure copper.

M. Turgot proposed to abolish the offices of treasurers and receivers-general of the finances. He wished to establish, in the manner of bankers, a weekly correspondence with the local receivers, followed with an obligation to payment, the forms of which, for the convenience of saving time, should be in print. He wished to make the local expenses of the state be paid in the provinces by the receivers,

in order to simplify the accounts of the expenditure, and to have the overplus only transmitted to Paris.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

Illustrating what has been advanced in Chap. II. of this Volume, on the Natural Effects of the ALLIANCES of CATHOLIC PRINCES in the South of Europe with their Equals, without any Intermixture of their Race with Foreign Blood.


Henry IV. Mary of Medicis.
Lewis XIII.
Philip III., King of Spain. Margaret of Austria.
Anne of Austria.
LEWIS XIV.
Philip III. Margaret of Austria.
Philip IV. King of Spain.
MARIA-THERESA of Austria.
MONSEIGNEUR, GRAND DAUPHIN.
Ferdinand III., Emperor. Mary-Anne of Austria.
Mary-Anne of Austria.
William of Bavaria. Renée of Lorraine.
Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria.
Ferdinand III., Emperor. Mary-Anne of Bavaria.
Mary-Anne of Austria.
FERDINAND, Elector of Bavaria.
DUKE OF BURGUNDY, Dauphin.
Charles-Emanuel I. Catherine of Austria.
Victor Amadeus I.
Henry IV. Mary of Medicis.
Christina of France.
Victor Amadeus I. of Savoy.
Christina of France.
HENRIETTA-ADELAIDE of Savoy.
MARIA-ANNE VICTOIRE of Bavaria.
CHARLES EMMANUEL II.
Henry of Savoy. Anne of Lorraine.
Charles Amadeus, Duke of Nemours.
Christina of France.
Cæsar of Vendôme. Francis of Lorraine.
Elizabeth of Vendôme.
MARIA-JANE BAPTISTE of Savoy.
VICTOR-AMADEUS of Savoy.
MARIA-ADELAIDE of Savoy.
Henry IV. Mary of Medicis.
Lewis XIII.
Philip III., King of Spain. Margaret of Austria.
Anne of Austria.
PHILIP, MONSIEUR, Brother of Lewis XIV.
Anne of Austria.
James I. of England. Anne of Denmark.
Charles I. of England.
Henry IV. Mary of Medicis.
Henrietta-Maria of France.
HENRIETTA-ANNE STUART.
ANNE-MARIA of Orleans.
LEWIS V.
LEWIS, DAUPHIN.
LEWIS VI.
LEWIS CHARLES, Duke of

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IT appears from the preceding table, that the blood of Lewis XV., his father and ancestors, was a re-composition of the same blood, proceeding from the alliances perpetually contracted by the house of Bourbon with the catholic houses of Savoy, Lorraine, Austria, and Bavaria; so that, in ascending to the genealogical line of Henry IV., by fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, this prince was five times the great-great-grandfather of Lewis XV., and Mary of Medicis five times his great-great-grandmother.

Philip III., king of Spain, was three times his great-great-grandfather, and Margaret of Austria as many times his great-great-grandmother; and so of other multiplications.

In the same line of Henry IV. we find, among thirty-two great-great-grandfathers and great-great-grandmothers of Lewis XV., six personages of the house of Bourbon, five of the house of Medicis, eleven males, or females of the house of Austria-Hapsburg; three of the house of Savoy, three of the house of Lorraine, two of the house of Bavaria, one

prince of the house of Stuart, and one Danish princess.

In ascending towards the same degrees from the dauphin, son of Lewis XVI., and by the side of his mother, Maria Antoinetta, born archduchess of Austria in right of Maria Theresa, and of Lorraine, in right of Francis I. her father, the results are the same. Thus it appears, that, during the space of several ages, the reigning catholic families multiplied mutually and exclusively among themselves, contrary to the intention of nature. I have already spoken of the physical consequences of this practice.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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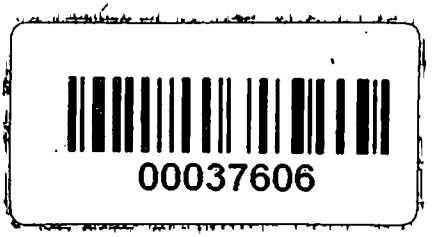
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